MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel

Volume 1 & 2

(U.S. Edition)

October 2003
- May 2006

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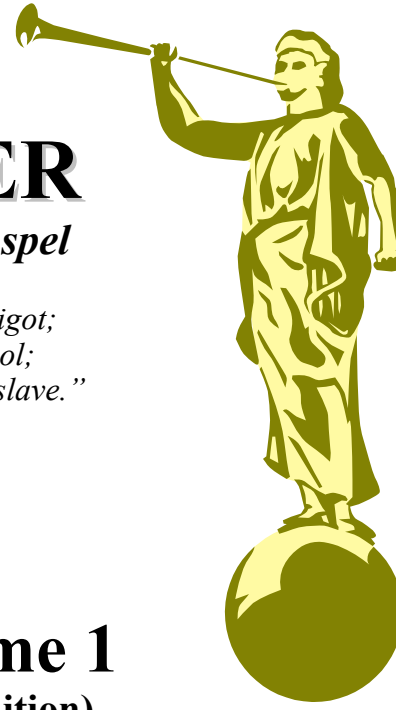

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel

"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."

Volume 1

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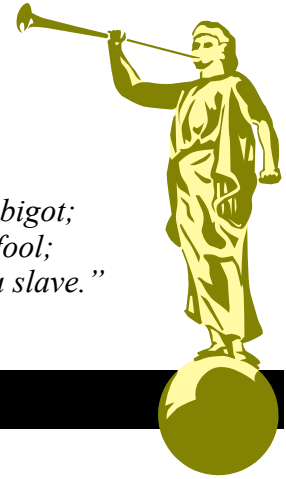

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Who truly is the God of the Old Testament?

Issue 1, Oct - Nov 2003

A New Chapter

A brief history

The Messenger magazine was first printed at the end of 1991 under the title of "Truth Seeker", and was began by two members of the LDS Church, who both worked full time for the Church in its offices in England. One of whom was serving as a Bishop, and the other as an Elders Quorum President (in a different ward).

Over it's 12 year history so far it has had three different editors, and publication has paused on two occasions. One of those being prior to this new American edition, and the other when it changed it's name to the Messenger in 1997. Although primarily distributed in England and Europe, the magazine, or portions of it, has been on the Internet from 1994, and the response to it from other Latter-day Saints was overwhelmingly positive.

This is our first American issue, and for this reason we have restarted the numbering of the volumes and issues. However, the articles are new, and have not appeared in the magazine before. We intend to produce this magazine on a bi-monthly basis at first, and if there is sufficient interest and contributions we will consider publishing it on a monthly basis.

The purpose of this periodical

In the Spring of 1820 a young boy found the courage to ask God for an answer, and the faith to expect a reply. At that time the prayers of millions of people - who were pleading for an end to the dark age of ignorance that covered the earth - were heard. The long absent light of revelation burst forth from heaven again, to restore the truths to mankind that they had lost over a thousand years.

That youth became a man - a Prophet whom the Lord entrusted with a great task: to bring forth the word of God and the authority needed to administer the ordinances necessary for our salvation to a world whose traditions fought against such ideas, and which would rather persecute than listen. Only a few recognized the truth and were willing to sacrifice all they had for it, and finally the same gospel taught by Jesus the Christ was established on the earth, never to be changed or removed, but to stand forever as the entrance into God's heavenly kingdom.

Almost two centuries have passed since the momentous occasion when heaven first touched earth, heralding the beginning of a new dispensation. If the Prophet who began that great work were to return now, he would find the world a very different place. We now take for granted luxuries the likes of which our ancestors could only dream of,

and yet the same social problems of crime and poverty still plague us.

Sadly those who have sought to set up God's kingdom on earth have often been influenced by the downward trends of the world. Although the number of members of God's Church have increased dramatically since its inception, only a small percentage are willing to live all of the gospel. The majority are fed on a 'milk' which satisfies their spiritual appetites. However, for some a diet of 'milk' will be inadequate, and they will desire to learn of the meatier doctrines and be willing to put forth the effort to live up to that greater knowledge. This periodical has been produced for that purpose.

Comments on previous issues

"I think you brethren are doing such a marvelous job of "The Messenger" that I'd like to encourage you to continue with it and keep copies coming to us as you can print them."

Owen A. Allred, Utah, 3 June 1999

"I've always thought English Mormons were the real thing! ... At any rate, I very much admire what you're doing."

Reverend N.H., Utah, 6 September 1999

"First I would like to say thank you. I really enjoy the articles ..., it gives me a chance to forget where I am and remember what it is like back home. During deployments it is one of the highlights of my days."

J.B., U.S. Navy, 1999

"It's always a pleasure to find people interested in and open dialogue about all things in the realm of truth. It often makes us uncomfortable to address our own prejudices and confront our contradictions. Your page seems to offer an alternative view of Mormonism and is informative yet non-threatening. Looking forward to reading some more."

E.H., 15/4/98.

The Fundamentals of the Fullness of the Gospel

Amongst Fundamentalists it is an oft-quoted statement that "the fullness of the Gospel is plural marriage and the united order", but when we look more closely, Fundamentalism in its entirety is far more than just those two principles.

The majority of those people who consider themselves Fundamentalists neither live plural marriage nor the united order[1] and yet say they believe in and are trying to live the fullness of the Gospel. Perhaps they are waiting for the right opportunity, or maybe the complexities of life prevent them from following their beliefs for a while. Yet they still keep the faith in their hearts, and hope to live such laws one day.

So if Fundamentalism is more than those two commandments, what else is it? Indeed celestial marriage and consecration are capstone laws, and essential to our exaltation, but they themselves rest on a firm foundation of even simpler precepts that are usually overlooked by our critics and even sometimes by us.

What is it then that separates Fundamentalism from the mainstream of modern orthodox Mormon thought? What makes our outlook so different and gives us our unique perspective on the Gospel? One basic belief that underpins the fabric of our faith: The Gospel is unchanging.

The Gospel cannot change

"The Gospel has always been the same;"[2] stated Joseph Smith. But since his day some have argued that doctrines can and do change. To them what is true today, might not be true tomorrow. Yet the scriptures teach us that truth itself "is a knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come."[3] This has not stopped some from believing however that the Gospel varies from age to age with technology and fashions.

Let us consider an example of how views of the Gospel and acceptance of it might change while its principles remain the same. Let us suppose that a prophet of God taught a true doctrine from the pulpit in General Conference over a hundred years ago. His words were recorded

1 "Contrary to popular assumptions, polygamy is not what attracts most converts to Mormon Fundamentalism." *(D. Michael Quinn, Fundamentalism and Society p. 252, 1993)*

2 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 264. This quote is so succinct and so powerful that it was thought superfluous to include any – of the many - others on the subject. For scriptural substantiation see Ps 89:34; Eccl 3:14; Matt 5:18; Morm 9:19 & D&C 29:34.

3 Doctrine and Covenants 93:24

in shorthand, and he had the chance to review them and correct them if necessary. He repeated the same teaching at least two dozen times in public, all recorded by stenographers as well as in private councils of which we have minutes and diary entries. What he said on each occasion was consistent, and he referred to what he imparted as a doctrine, a revelation, and what his predecessor also taught. Not only that, he told the Saints that their salvation was dependent upon their acceptance or rejection of it.

Now what if, over the passage of time, this doctrine became downplayed, perhaps initially because of wanting to put the focus on other principles that seem more important to understand or teach. Maybe it became a mystery to most of the Saints and ultimately too controversial for many of them to give it much credence. In such a situation what has changed? Is the doctrine still true? Do we ultimately still have to accept it, and are we still responsible if we reject it?

Let us take this scenario even further, to a hundred years after the doctrine was first proclaimed and to a time in which the teaching has become almost an embarrassment, as anti-Mormons now use it to attack the Church for no longer teaching it, and some members - seeking to defend the faith - argue that it is misunderstood, or was not taught at all. Imagine in such a situation even General Authorities discounting the doctrine, and ultimately one of them, perhaps even the Church President, calling it – or the anti-Mormon understanding of it – a false theory.

This might lead many members to conclude not to study the real doctrine at all and to look on those few who still believed it as dubious if not heretics. Some overzealous Bishops and Stake Presidents, who believe they are trying to uphold the Church, might even consider excommunicating those whose only crime is accepting the teachings of a previous prophet, and perhaps sharing this knowledge with their friends. While those few who do learn that the doctrine was indeed taught might think that the Church President who taught it at best knew less than his successors, had mistaken a false doctrine for a true one, or had taught a false doctrine, and may have become a fallen prophet.

But if they believe this one prophet fell and taught falsely, then this undermines their faith in his successors too, including the current leader, because they derived their authority through him. What guarantee do they have that the living president is any more correct or understands doctrine any better? Thus the anti-Mormons have served their mission well, they have turned a true doctrine into an embarrassment, then a theory, and eventually something which may damn people for refusing to take it seriously and study it, or to condemn it prematurely without having done so.

Some will say that such a situation as this could not happen, but the scenario presented here was not a fictional one, it concerns a real teaching which went from being plainly taught, to being a mystery, a

controversy, and then considered a false theory. It is called the Adam-God doctrine by some, and it was taught several times in General Conference by Brigham Young[4], and at least two dozen other occasions in public[5], as well as by other General Authorities[6]. It was once part of the temple ceremony[7], and one Apostle commented that most of the Church members believed it to be true.[8] Yet with the persecutions the Mormons encountered the doctrine was pushed to the background, and then over time it became a subject some were reticent to speak about. It was relegated to a theory those antagonistic to the Church seemed to care about, only to use as a club against the Church, and few Saints gave it any credence. Few Saints understand it anymore, and those few who do are likely to be looked upon with suspicion by their fellow members, if they are able to retain their membership for holding the belief.

However, who Adam was cannot change. It is a matter of history, and we cannot change the past. He either was our Father in heaven before coming to earth or He was not. To say that it is a false doctrine, would be to conclude that Brigham Young (who knew Joseph better than any man ever did) misunderstood him on such a very important subject. It would also mean that Brother Brigham did not know the difference between receiving a true revelation and a false one, that he was completely wrong about who God was, and that he repeatedly taught the saints a false doctrine, while telling them it was essential to their exaltation to know it. If that were the situation, how could we trust President Young on anything? And how could we trust his successors any more than him, and how could they be in any better position to judge?

If we study his teachings and those of Joseph Smith and find that they did indeed teach the Adam-God doctrine and that it is essential to understand it, then could the doctrine ever become false just because a subsequent Church leader misunderstands it, does not personally accept it, or condemns the theories that have arisen around it? Does anyone have the authority to change the truth, and are we ever justified in rejecting the truth because we have relied on the word of another, whoever they may be?

This is one example of the folly of believing that the Gospel can

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4 See Journal of Discourses 1:50 (9 April 1852); 5:331 (7 Oct. 1857); 7:285 (9 Oct. 1859) & Manuscript Addresses for 8 Oct. 1854 and 8 Oct. 1861.

5 See “The Unknown God”, Appendix, for a complete list.

6 For examples of George Q. Cannon, Orson Hyde, Heber C. Kimball, Lorenzo Snow, Daniel H. Wells, Wilford Woodruff & Brigham Young Jr. teaching or accepting this doctrine, see “The Unknown God”, Appendix.

7 The Lecture at the Veil as recorded in the diary of L. John Nuttall (Secretary to the First Presidency), 7 February 1877.

8 "The doctrine preached by President Young a few years back wherein he says that Adam is our God, the God we worship - that most of the people believe this. Some believe it because the President says so; others because they can find a testimony." Abraham O. Smoot; Minutes, School of the Prophets, 18 June 1868.

change. The Gospel stands unchanged throughout time, and the Saints acceptance or rejection of it varies from age to age, but the blessings and rewards for believing and living it always remain available to us, even if most of the Saints do not accept some of them. If truth is unchanging, and "Mormonism is truth" as Joseph Smith proclaimed, then our only safe course is following that "old time religion" that existed from the days of Adam to the present. This truth was published by the Church only a few decades ago:

> "To say that the Gospel may be changed is to say that either God has changed, ... It is obvious therefore that no one can change the Gospel, and that if they attempt to do so, they only set up a man-made system which is not the Gospel, but is merely a reflection of their own views. And since only God can save, only His Gospel can save, and if we substitute "any other gospel" there is no salvation in it."[9]

True prophets do not contradict on matters of doctrine

Along with the concept of an unchanging Gospel there are other principles inexorably linked which follow on logically and are cornerstones which uphold our religious foundations. The next one of these we will treat is the simple truth that true prophets teach true doctrines, and true prophets do not conflict with each other in their teachings on such doctrines.

Prophets can and have expressed opinions throughout time. Even within the scriptures a few of the personal views of the Apostles and prophets who wrote them have been included. Paul for example spoke of his personal "judgment" on a particular matter on which the Lord had not revealed His commandment,[10] and in another passage he made it clear that he was speaking rather than the Lord.[11] Likewise the Nephite authors of the *Book of Mormon* spoke of their imperfections and weaknesses of language that they hoped would not prejudice their future readers against their accounts[12].

There is a broad difference though between a personal view, or a moment of speculation, and a Prophet saying something is the word or the will of the Lord. When they proclaim a truth, an unalterable fact of the Gospel and God, they set up a standard by which other teachings are to be judged and by which we will be judged according to our

9 LDS Church News, 5 June 1965, p. 16

10 1 Corinthians 7:25: "I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, ..."

11 1 Corinthians 7:12: "But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: ...", see verse 6.

12 1 Nephi 19:6; 2 Nephi 33:4,11; Omni 1:20; Mormon 8:17; 9:31; Ether 12:23-25; see D&C 1:25

acceptance or rejection. The Lord gave us the privilege and responsibility of gaining from Him a spiritual witness of such doctrines, but whether we feel our prayers are answered negatively or affirmatively, if at all, does not alter what has been revealed.

The scriptures or "standard works" as we call them are testaments, not only of God's dealing with His children, but of thousands of years of truths revealed to us that have stood the test of time. They are the ultimate measure of truth. While science books may change yearly to keep up with the different theories of scientists, the precepts found in God's word have never been altered just as God's purposes have not.

Everyone, from the humblest Saint to the President of the Church are subject to having their words subject to the test of being compared to those of the scriptural cannon. Joseph Smith himself gave the warning that, "If any man writes to you, or preaches to you, doctrines contrary to the Bible, or Book of Mormon, or the Book of Doctrine and Covenants, set him down as an impostor."[13] He did not exclude himself from being liable to such a comparison, and challenged the world, "If any man will prove to me by one passage of holy writ, one item I believe to be false, I will renounce it and disclaim it as far as I have promulgated it."[14]

Thus we see even a prophet of God is subject to his predecessors in matters of doctrine. He cannot hope to tear away the foundation they built and hope to have some firm ground left to stand upon himself. He derives his authority from them, and his knowledge of the Gospel too. He cannot undermine them without undermining his own position, and if he removes himself from them on matters of doctrine in this life, he could find himself outside the heavenly home they enjoy in the eternities.

One modern LDS General Authority taught that "revelation is what Joseph Smith says unless Spencer W. Kimball says otherwise!"[15] God is not any more dependent or subject upon President Kimball that He was upon the Prophet Joseph. His revelations are not subject to the acceptance of others. However, it was Joseph Smith who laid the foundations of this dispensation of the Gospel, who presides over the keys of the Priesthood in these last days, who precedes all of his successors, and who will ultimately judge those who came after him in whatever office they hold.

To suppose that Joseph Smith (to whom God chose to restore the Gospel, who was visited, taught and given authority by the greatest prophets of all time and Jesus Himself) could be superseded by anyone who derived their authority from him would be to lay the axe at the root of the tree on whose branches they sit. Just as a stream can rise no higher than the fountain from which it springs, so too no one can hope to

13 Joseph Smith, Times and Seasons 5:490
14 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 327
15 S. Dilworth Young, BYU fireside, 5 May 1974.

continue along the same stream for long by trying to cut off themselves from the source of the river from which they sprang.

Joseph Smith himself had this warning for those who would try to disregard his mission and the revelations revealed through him, "if any man preach any other gospel than that which I have preached he shall be cursed."[16] In saying this he was but paraphrasing the words his own predecessor, the Apostle Paul gave in his epistle to the Galatians, in which he warned that even if "an angel from heaven"[17] shall preach contrary to the Gospel, that he should be disregarded. The Prophet concurred, and instructed the Saints that angels (as well as men) could be judged to be false if they were "contradicting a former revelation"[18]

The saving ordinances should not be altered

One of the visible outward signs of our our willingness to commit to the revelations of God and to accept it's authority in our lives is to receive the ordinances of the Gospel. This shows God and witnesses to earth and heaven that we are willing to take steps forward, to show greater devotion, and take on more responsibilities. It also opens the way to receive greater blessings.

As we see in with the sacrament and baptism, many ordinances have specific words that must be *spoken exactly* to be considered valid. Baptism must also be performed in a certain way. Each of the words we use carries with it great meaning, and the actions we use to carry out the ordinance display a powerful symbolism. In performing an ordinance in its prescribed manner also shows we recognize the position of God to detail how we should perform it and that we are looking to Him to recognize our administrations.

Some would argue that such wording or symbolism is outdated and, that such ordinances should be updated, that we should conform to ways the world can more easily accept and understand. This is not a new argument. Doubtless some of the early Christian leaders with the best intent in the world realized the difficulties of sometimes performing baptism by immersion. They probably reasoned that some people lived too far away from enough water or that others might seem too old or sick to immerse in such a manner. So they began making exceptions for a few potential converts until it reached the point that it seemed so much more convenient to sprinkle everyone instead of baptizing them. Then someone may have suggested, "why wait until people are adults to baptize them? Life is short, and it would be terrible for someone to miss the opportunity." Such views eventually took hold until a point was reach where the qualifications for, wording of, meaning and purpose of

16 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 368
17 Galatians 1:8
18 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 214

baptism were lost, along with any power or recognition from the heavens.

There are many other ordinances that require a specific pattern to be followed. The rites of the Endowment ceremony are included in this. Although the Prophet Joseph received these sacred temple ordinances and instructions "line upon line" as they were revealed unto him, he considered it absolutely essential that they be carried out as God intended them, so that they might be fully efficacious. During the last days of his life, with the Nauvoo temple still unfinished, Joseph realized that he would not be able to carry out the Endowment fully in line with God's designs, and so he put this responsibility upon his successor, Brigham Young, telling him, "we have done the best we could under the circumstances in which we are placed, and I wish you to take this matter in hand and organize and systematize all these ceremonies."[19]

Despite this, there was no doubt that the Endowment – once carried out in its full form – was to remain unchanged, and in 1877 President Young finished recording the ceremony and pronounced it "perfect". There was also no argument at the time over whether it ever could be changed, the Prophet had made it clear that, "The order of the House of God has been and ever will be the same, even after Christ comes ..."[20]

Yet, less than fifty years later, Stephen L. Richards, a member of the Church's Council of Twelve, stating in General Conference, "I hold it entirely compatible, with the genius of the Church to change its forms of procedure, customs and **ordinances** in accordance with our own knowledge and experience. I would not discard an old practice merely because it is old, but only after it has outworn its usefulness." He pointed out " that some changes in the **ordinances**, forms and methods of the Church" had been made and that some of these changes had "disturbed some of the members." But, "Personally, I approve of those changes and hope the general authorities will be led to make others as changing conditions warrant."[21]

He was speaking after some alterations had already been made to the Endowment, such as removing the Adam-God doctrine which holds the key to the identity of God, and taking symbols and parts away from the sacred Priesthood garment. His words went unchallenged publicly by any other General Authorities, and the changes to ordinances continued. Some ordinances were omitted completely. The most drastic changes to the Endowment occurring just over a decade ago, when the most sacred rite to bring us into the presence of God was taken away, along with many other 'keys' to unlock the heavens. In the process sacred symbolism was also lost, along with it much of the

19 L. John Nuttall Journal, Vol. 1, pp. 18-19
20 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 91
21 Salt Lake Tribune, 10 April 1932

understanding of what the Endowment was for and how it relates to our lives. Thus only those aware of this situation, and who know those with the knowledge and authority to administer the Endowment as revealed by God can receive it in its fullness, whereas many of the Saints only know rites and ordinances which carry lesser understanding, power, recognition and glory in heaven.

Joseph Smith taught, God "set the ordinances to be the same forever and ever,"[22] and, "Ordinances instituted in heaven before the foundation of this world in the Priesthood for the salvation of man, are not to be altered or changed."[23] God may reward us for our faith and for those things we do with the right intent, but it will never be the same or a substitute for doing exactly as He expects us to in conforming specifically with His requirements. We cannot claim the same reward as those who have complied with all that God has restored, in the form and manner in which He restored it.

The requirements for exaltation do not vary

God did not give us any unnecessary ordinances or commandments, and those which He has stated are essential to exaltation cannot be discarded. Some point to the Mosaic law as an example of how God gave different groups of people different requirements, but they fail to understand that what the Lord gave the ancient Israelites a lesser law, because they were unworthy or incapable of fully living the Gospel. Yet even then there were a few amongst them, such as Moses himself and the seventy elders of Israel, that were able to come into the presence of God and were able to live the laws necessary to qualify for their exaltation.

Now let us suppose another scenario in which the majority of the Saints prove themselves unworthy or are perhaps unwilling to live a law of God. Perhaps the persecutions against them seem too much, or the standards of the world are so different. Maybe earthly laws are enacted against them.

Indeed the Lord might bear with them for a while because of the hazards of the times. He may be patient with them and understanding of their challenges. But this does not mean He will offer them the same celestial reward as those who live such a law despite the problems associated with it. Nor does it mean that those who do not live it can claim the same reward as those who did, despite the circumstances.

God would be unjust if he required such a sacrifice of His people in one age but not in another. Yet some have said, "I'm glad I don't have to live Plural Marriage, gather to Zion, or live the United Order." They believe they are excused because of civil law, or because the majority of

22 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 168
23 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 308

the other Saints have taken a different course. But God "doth not vary from that which he hath said."[24] The requirements for exaltation were decided long before we came to earth, as was revealed to the Prophet:

> "There is a law irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated - and when we receive any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated."[25]

"The works, and the designs, and the purposes of God cannot be frustrated,"[26] the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith, just as He promised to Nephi that He gave no commandment without preparing a way that it could be lived.[27] Some lack faith in those promises it seems or perhaps look for excuses not to live commandments they consider too awkward. Others are perhaps unaware of how the Lord has continued the Gospel in its fullness, and when they learn of it will realize how God's will and prophecies are still being fulfilled.

Celestial Plural Marriage is one of those essential requirements, decided upon "before the foundation of the world."[28] In fact it is from the revelation on this law in the Doctrine in Covenants that the word "exaltation"[29] was first revealed, such is the importance of this commandment. Thus we see the association between polygamy, as the world calls it, and the fundamental principles of an unchanging Gospel, unalterable ordinances, and the unvarying requirements of exaltation. We also see how attacks on such doctrines and laws actually are an attack on much simpler, more fundamental precepts that make up the foundations of not just Mormon Fundamentalism but of faith in any of the principles we believe as Christians and Latter-day Saints.

Yet there will always be those who believe they are defending the faith who may be eager to please their leaders, who are reluctant to offend the world, or who are unaware of these issues. They may condemn such changes in ancient times as apostasy, and argue such changes then showed a need for a restoration of the Gospel. Yet they look upon such changes since as evidence of the existence of 'revelation' (despite the absence of the word of the Lord on the subject), and will feel duty bound as a good Church member to sustain them. This easier road only leads to a lesser glory. Those who have studied a little deeper and are prepared to sacrifice a little more will rely on God who says, "I the Lord am everlasting, and my everlasting covenants cannot be abrogated nor done away with; but they stand forever. ... I the Lord do

24 Doctrine & Covenants 3:2
25 Doctrine & Covenants 130:20-21
26 Doctrine & Covenants 3:1
27 1 Nephi 3:7
28 Doctrine & Covenants 132:5,63
29 Doctrine & Covenants 132:17,19,22,23,26,29,37,39,49,57,63

not change, and my word and my covenants do not."[30]

Those who accept the cornerstone precepts are indeed Fundamentalists already in their hearts (whether they realize it or not), and if their intent is to serve God with all their "might, mind, and strength" they will inevitably become Fundamentalists in their actions and associations. This is what it means to be a Mormon Fundamentalist.

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30 Revelation to John Taylor, 26 September 1886. Unpublished Revelations 88:3,6

1886 – A Poetic Account

In the darkest hour, hidden from the world
That sought the destruction of God's servant
Men seeking concession a plan unfurled
To persuade their prophet they were sent

“But,” he said, “the Lord's word must be sought”
Man cannot hope to change the path to God
And thus set the laws of heaven at naught
Rather than holding to revelation as a their rod

So was the plan, to bed they retired
Hoping tomorrow would bring divine will
God's mouthpiece prayed to be inspired
Promising all the Lord would reveal he'd fulfill

Light from his room startled the guard
Whose mission it was to protect his sire
No-one came, the windows were barred
Yet nothing was wrong the Spirit did inspire

“Who was that with thee, dear brother?”
The man asked of voices that he heard
“Thou needs not fear it was your Saviour
And from him I have received God's word”

“And the other man who came after him?”
“Twas none other than Prophet Joseph, my head
Who told me not to bend to men's whims
But to hold fast to the course he showed instead”

Trusted brethren all met after rising that morn
To keep God's law they were put under covenant
Prepared to withstand the world's scorn
No matter what direction Church members went

When asked if concession he had considered
Some plead the next day as brethren met together
The answer came clear and loud, “never!”
A way has been shown how it will go on forever

“Better, tongue was torn from roof of mouth”
He said, “rather than sign our salvation away

Or that my hand was severed I do avow
Than to sign concessions I'd be swayed”

Then twas the divine revelation written
“I have not revoked this law, nor will I”
The voice of God declared from heaven
Ending all thought of suspension thereby

“All those who would enter into my glory
- must and shall obey my law,” said the Lord
Or by opposing, risk God's wrath and fury
As upon the world who'd fight against His word

“You may yet have to surrender your lives
If to God's law you wish to remain true
You may loose profession, home, or wives
But woe to those who bring troubles upon you”

Among the righteous Saints who live the principle
In this covenant each year a child must be born
Though to the world it may seem reprehensible
Your God will honor you, amidst society's scorn

The faithful men had to them authority given
And ability to ordain others as and when
To carry out the designs of the laws of heaven
That this work will go on until the end

Above the ground the prophet did stand
And light emanated from his shining face
Such a sign no doubt God had planned
To show His devout servant acted in His place

Many things from memory would be hidden
Details realized as prophesy was fulfilled
Restored to mind when needed from heaven
Being but another testimony of God's will

Following manys refusal to obey God's law
Three-quarters of the Saints will apostatize
Few ever considered living the Gospel to the full
So only a handful of the elect will even realize

But through acceptance of an advisory declaration
Those who concede won't be able to attain eternal life

Revocation of virtuous laws will lead to whoredom
Whilst choicest seed comes to man with several wives

When seventh President presides it is prophesied
That even God's holy temple will be mortgaged
But One Mighty and Strong in such an era will arise
To release the Church from its spiritual bondage

Although men will believe the Priesthood they hold
Whilst wrongly conferred, only an office is given
They will not have the power to which they are called
Nor be able to exercise the power of heaven

But upon faithful men a commission has been placed
So that there always will be those with the authority
And whatever persecution they may face
There will be someone to perform holy ceremonies

Through these proceedings the Prophet stood by
To ensure the Gospel would remain the same
And although others this testimonies may deny
God's laws will never be removed from the earth again

Losing the Priesthood

Another look at John Taylor's 1886 prophecy
regarding the validity of the Priesthood in the Church

In the Autumn of 1886, President John Taylor predicted that there would one day be a question over validity of the Priesthood held by many of the Saints:

> "I would be surprised if ten percent of those who claim to hold the Melchizedek Priesthood will remain true and faithful to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, at that time of the seventh President, and there would be thousands that think they hold the Priesthood at that time, but would not have it properly conferred upon them."[1]

President Taylor's worry it seemed was also shared by his counselor, George Q. Cannon. According to one witness, Canon stated in a meeting with the Saints, that "The day will come when men's Priesthood and authority will be called into question, and you will find out that there will be hundreds who have no Priesthood, but believe they hold it, they holding only an office in the Church."[2]

Although no contemporary accounts of these particular statements, but they are not dissimilar from other warnings and prophecies made by other Church leaders during the same era. For example in 1884 President Cannon cautioned the Saints that "the time will come when it will be necessary for every man to trace the line in which he has received the Priesthood that he exercises. ... I believe this is of extreme importance, ... Every man should be careful on this point, to know where he gets his Priesthood; that it has come to him clean and undefiled, legitimately;"[3]

These quotes raise many issues, such as what would cause some of the Saints to lose the Priesthood or give it incorrectly? how could such a situation arise in which this could occur, and some Saints not know about it? and how can we ensure that the Priesthood we hold is legitimate? Fortunately the Lord's servants have left answers to all of these questions, although there are several different viewpoints on these matters which we will try to cover in this treatment of the subject.

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1 27 September 1886, John W. Woolley home, Centreville, Utah
2 1901, Draper, Utah, as related by Daniel R. Bateman, Ballard-Jensen Correspondence
3 18 October 1884, Journal of Discourses 26:24

Priesthood Conferral

President Taylor's prophecy has traditionally been interpreted amongst many Fundamentalism and their critics to refer only to the issue of changes in the wording of Priesthood ordinations. This was because he spoke of the Priesthood not being properly conferred, and he spoke of the prophesy coming to fulfillment during the time of the seventh President of the Church, during whose tenure the method of ordination certainly was altered.

Certainly, Church leaders such as Brigham Young stated the importance of conferring the Priesthood before ordaining to an office therein. "Do not forget to confer the High Priesthood",[4] he instructed in 1877. In doing so he was following the president laid down with the restoration of the Priesthood to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in 1829, when John the Baptist spoke the words, "Upon my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron."[5]

However those who oppose the necessity of conferring the Priesthood have pointed out several Journal entries, which seem to chronicle ordination done early in this dispensation which did not use the word 'confer', as well as statements from some early General Authorities in which they expressed that they believed it didn't matter if a conferral was done or not. Although it is quite probable that the reason why the diaries of early members did not contain the term 'confer' is because either they were primarily interested in recording the office they had been ordained to, and just expected that others who might read their account would assume a conferral had taken place. This does not explain, however, the remarks of Church authorities who did not think conferral was necessary.

President George Q. Cannon has been cited as someone who would have agreed with Heber J. Grant's alteration of the method of ordination,[6] yet he stated that "care should be taken to bestow the authority", and gave the conferral of Priesthood upon Joseph and Oliver by John the Baptist as an ideal method of ordination.[7]

Of course we could conclude that those who disagreed with the need for conferral were just sharing an opinion of theirs, that had no effect on general practice of ordination amongst the Saints. Alternatively, we might think that they were wrong, or that it is due to ordinations they may have performed (without conferring) that the situation arose that President Taylor prophesied about. Such explanations do not seem to cover all of the accounts and statements. But there are aspects to this subject which have sometimes been overlooked.

4 Deseret News, 6 June 1877
5 29 May 1829, D&C 13:1
6 In Brian C. Hales, Is Fundamentalism Fundamental?
7 Juvenile Instructor 31:174-5, 1896

Let us begin with our concept of the Priesthood and its offices. When Joseph Smith received the Aaronic Priesthood there was no indication that he was ordained to any office in it, and the Lord revealed to him on a couple of occasions that "offices in the Church are appendages to the Priesthood."[8] Or, in other words, that the Priesthood can exist apart from an appointment to a specific office or calling in the Church.

At least one Church authority, President Charles W. Penrose, had a different view on this matter. One LDS scholar summarised a sermon he gave in 1921 that touched on the this issue, "President Penrose conveyed the impression that priesthood does not exist apart from priesthood offices."[9]

This view was undoubtedly what led him to state a few years earlier, "We have been making a mistake in ordinations. We have been conferring the priesthood, and it ought not to be done. If we confer the Priesthood on a man, we give him all the offices and callings in the Church. We should ordain directly to the office in the Priesthood."[10]

In that same year the First Presidency (which he was part of) made its first statement regarding ordaining without conferring,[11] and formally instructed the Priesthood in line with this view in 1921.[12]

It seems before 1919 it was understood that a person being ordained was being given the Priesthood, yet after that point it was no longer certain, as the view had begun to take hold no-one (apart from perhaps the Church President) had the Priesthood, but only had offices in the Church. The understanding of what the Priesthood was and who could hold it had changed fundamentally, from being ordained into the Melchizedek Priesthood to being ordained into the Church. Possibly it was because of this, that many receiving ordination under such situation might have indeed only received what they were promised - an office in the Church, without the Priesthood itself. In this way the change in ordination procedure could have been more of a sign of the prophecy being fulfilled rather than the only reason.

All of this happened despite Joseph F. Smith's statement, as Church President in 1901, that conferring should precede ordination.[13] Whatever ambiguity may have existed before President Smith made it clear what method he expected in the Church, only to have it reversed a couple of decades later.

Even if ordinations had been done incorrectly beforehand,

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8 28 March 1835, D&C 107:5 & D&C 84:29-30

9 Maxine Hanks, Women and Authority, Ch.2, p.39; see General Conference, April 1921, p. 108

10 Stake Quarterly Conference, Utah Stake, Provo, Utah, 1919, as recollected by Daniel R. Peay.

11 1919, in the Appendix of Gospel Doctrine by Joseph F. Smith

12 23 April 1921 (see also Missionary Handbooks after that time)

13 1901, Improvement Era 4:394

President Smith set a standard, from which Heber J. Grant deviated, and opposed the explicit instructions of his predecessor on how ordinations were to be done. If differences in conferring had not invalidated ordinations before, one might argue that they did after President Smith made the matter clear.

Part 2

Having treated the question of what part Priesthood ordinations may have played in John Taylor's prophesy questioning the validity of many of the Saint's authority, we need to look past the assumption it was fulfilled (or was even primarily) because of that issue. There were many other reasons and situations which the early prophets and apostles warned could lead to many – if not most – of the Saints losing the Priesthood or its power.

Celestial (Plural) Marriage – The Law of the Priesthood

One area of great importance to this issue was that of Celestial (or Plural) Marriage. Most Latter-day Saints today might not easily see the correlation though, as they may think that it was practiced just to increase the number of Church members or as a trial of faith. Indeed it certainly was a trial and test of faith for those who lived it, but it was also an essential part of the faith of those who believed it to be a true principle.

The Latter-day Saints before the 1890s believed it to be "a necessity to man's highest exaltation in the life to come."[14] as the First Presidency of the time put it, and it was called the "law of the Priesthood"[15] in the revelation which Joseph received on the subject in 1843. The Saints were also taught it was part of the restoration of the Gospel, that it was needed for God's kingdom to progress, and that through it God sent his choicest spirits. It has been a source of controversy ever since, and an important principle in the issue of Priesthood authority.

Joseph was told by God for instance that if he did not proceed with establishing Plural Marriage that "his Priesthood would be taken from him."[16] Those to whom he revealed that law were put under the same obligation, as John Taylor relates, "When this commandment was

14 *First Presidency & Twelve, Petition for Amnesty, 19 December 1891.* "The only men who become Gods, even the Sons of God, are those who enter into polygamy." *(Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses, Vol.11, p.268 - p.269, 19 August 1866)*

15 "I am the Lord thy God, and will give unto thee the law of my Holy Priesthood, as was ordained by me and my Father before the world was." (D&C 132:28, 58, 61, 64)

16 Eliza R. Snow, Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow, p. 69-70

given, it was so far religious, and so far binding upon the Elders of this Church, that it was told them if they were not prepared to enter into it, and to stem the torrent of opposition that would come in consequence of it, the keys of the kingdom would be taken from them and given to others."[17] Heber was told by Joseph that if he did not take another wife he would lose his Apostleship.[18]

The word of the Lord was explicit upon this point; "It is not meet that men who will not abide My law shall preside over My Priesthood;"[19] As John Taylor clarified it; "A man obeying a lesser law is not qualified to preside over those who keep a higher law."[20]

Thus, a man's Priesthood can be effected by what laws and commandments he refuses to live, and officiating in some offices is dependent upon fulfilling obligations the Lord has laid down to qualify those holding those callings. The Church and its apostles recognised this, and warned the Saints of the results of rejecting this law, and the effect it could have on the Priesthood -

> "What would be necessary to bring about the result nearest the hearts of the opponents of 'Mormonism', more properly termed the Gospel of the Son of God? Simply to renounce, abrogate or apostatize from the new and everlasting covenant of marriage in its fulness. Were the Church to do that as an entirety God would reject the Saints as a body. The authority would be withdrawn, with its gifts and powers, and there would be no more heavenly recognition of the administrations among the people. The heavens would permanently withdraw themselves, and the Lord would raise up another people of greater valor and stability, for his work must, according to His unalterable degrees, go forward ..."[21]

> "The entire Church and all of its Priesthood, with the Presidency at the head of it might motion and vote against this principle until doomsday with just one effect, (namely) to vote themselves away from the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, from the possession of their Priesthood, and to find themselves very speedily outside the Church and Kingdom of God; while he would raise up others that would honor and observe his

17 7 June 1866, Journal of Discourses 11:221-222
18 Life of Heber C. Kimball, Orson F. Whitney, p. 336, 1888 edition
19 Revelation to John Taylor, October 13th, 1882, Church Historians Office
20 John Taylor, October 10th, 1882, Life of Wilford Woodruff, Matthias F. Cowley, p. 542
21 Charles W. Penrose, Deseret Evening News, April 23rd, 1885

law."[22]

Thus, those who sustained such a course (and still do oppose His laws), have placed themselves outside of God's approval, without Him recognising their Priesthood, as He works instead with those who will honour His laws.

Changing Ordinances = Changing Priesthood

There is another area in which a persons Priesthood is affected and can be invalidated, and that is when they change ordinances from the pattern God reveals them, or assist in performing them in this altered fashion. From this point the power of the Priesthood begins to lessen, until all of its administrations are no longer valid. Joseph Smith was explicit on this point: "If there is no change of ordinances, there is no change of Priesthood."[23] So it follows, that if ordinances change, so does the Priesthood of those who administer them.

As the Prophet Joseph also put clearly, "Where there is no change of Priesthood, there is no change of ordinances."[24] The fact that ordinances have changed substantiates the argument that the Priesthood has been effected and lost through this.[25] The Prophet warned that this could happen and the consequences for those involved when he stated, "the ordinances must be kept in the very way God has appointed; otherwise their Priesthood will prove a cursing instead of a blessing."[26]

Some of the Saints may wonder what else has changed besides Celestial (plural) Marriage. Sadly they are unlikely to ever read in their Church manuals or even hear in General Conference anymore about the Law of Adoption, Rebaptism (for health and other reasons), Mother's Blessing, Prayer Circles in the home, or how the Endowment has changed substantially, and Priesthood offices and callings have been removed. Although some might still wonder "Why can't the Priesthood continue as it once did when ordinances change?" Brigham Young answered this beginning with a question for them -

Can any man or set of men officiate in dispensing the laws and administering the ordinances of the Kingdom of God or of the kingdoms and governments of the world legally, without first obeying those laws and submitting to those ordinances themselves?... no man has authority to officiate in the ordinances of heavenly or earthly governments only so

22 Deseret News, Editorial, 1 April 1885
23 2 July 1839, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 158
24 11 June 1843, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 308
25 For the Priesthood being changed, there is made the necessity a change also of the law. (Paul, Hebrews 7:12)
26 5 October 1840, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 169, History of the Church 4:209.

far as he has obeyed them himself.[27]

Why have such changes happened? They happened for the same reason in all dispensations, because many of the Saints want an easier life and to be more accepted by the world, no matter what the cost. As the First Presidency admitted after the Church stopped living Celestial (Plural) Marriage, that the Saints had done so, "To be at peace with the Government and in harmony with their fellow citizens who were not of their faith and to share in the confidence of the Government and people, our people have voluntarily put aside something which all their lives they have believed to be a sacred principle."[28]

Popularity with the World & Priesthood – Can They Co-Exist?

When the Saints entered the Salt Lake valley, they saw it as an escape from the persecution that had plagued them from even before Joseph Smith began translating the gold plates. They had seen so many of their so-called friends turn traitors too many times, they had lost their homes, and some had lost their lives, but had come to build up Deseret in the hope that they would be far enough away from Babylon physically and emotionally to be able to build up Zion. Brother Brigham had this same hope, but realised that popularity and riches had tempted the Saints before and could again, and gave them this warning about such a possibility: "When we see the time that we can willingly strike hands and have full fellowship with those who despise the Kingdom of God, know ye then that the Priesthood of the Son of God is out of your possession."[29]

This was not the only occasion he made such a stark warning, or lamented this possibility - "There is nothing that would soon weaken my hope and discourage me as to see this people in full fellowship with the world, and receive no more persecution from them because they are one with them. In such an event, we might bid farewell to the Holy Priesthood with all its blessings, privileges and aids to exaltations, principalities and powers in the eternities of the Gods."[30]

He pointed out the simple fact that popularity and priesthood cannot fully co-exist, as in order to gain popularity you have to sacrifice true principles, and when that happens the priesthood is lost with them. Many might argue, however, that such a day has not yet come, and the Saints are still subject to the rejection of the world. While we may occasionally hear of some prejudices that still continue, the hate once reserved for the Mormons has long since subsided amongst most people in America (if not the world), as President Heber J. Grant noticed in his

27 Brigham Young, October 8th, 1854.

28 Petition of Amnesty to Pres. B.F. Harrison , Messages of the First Presidency, Vol.3, p.229+

29 Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses 10:273

30 Brigham Young, 8 April 1862, Journal of Discourses 10:32 (see 4:38)

day -

> "My greatest happiness I find in the goodwill and friendship that has developed among all classes of people at home and abroad toward the LDS church during my lifetime. In place of early-day persecution and bitterness we now enjoy high regard and happy associations with all denominations."[31]

This situation could not have come without some cost being paid, without us downplaying or removing some of the beliefs and practices the world once found so offensive. James agreed that "friendship of the world is enmity with God;"[32] and Jesus (his brother) also taught that, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."[33]

We have already detailed some of the changes that occurred that led to this situation, and President George Q. Cannon spells out in detail what the results of such a course can only be - "There is nothing short of complete apostasy, a complete denial of every principle we have received, a throwing away of the Holy Priesthood, that can save us from persecution. When this takes place, the chief features of the Gospel are obliterated."[34]

We must remember though that the Lord has assured us though that the Gospel was restored for the last time, and so will never be taken away again. Likewise the authority to administer those ordinances must remain, and there must be a people upon the earth who maintain them in the very way God gave them.

"The Priesthood will never be taken away" affirmed Joseph Smith.[35] This does not mean however that the Church as a body will always have the fullness of the Priesthood available to the general membership. President J. Reuben Clark put it plainly; "The Priesthood can exist without the Church, but the Church cannot exist without the Priesthood."[36] Thus the Priesthood can act independently.

Excommunication and Priesthood
– Does the Church or a Person's Action's Effect Their Authority?

Where does all of this leave those who have maintained the ordinances as God restored them, who still live all of the laws of the

31 Heber J. Grant, Salt Lake Tribune, 22 November 1938.
32 James 4:4
33 John 15:18
34 George Q. Cannon, 15 June 1881, Journal of Discourses 22:373.
35 Millennial Star 8:139
36 J. Reuben Clark, March 1936, Improvement Era p. 134

Gospel, and believe all of it's doctrines? A strange situation has arisen since the turn of the century that many of those not supporting the very changes that may invalidate the Priesthood have been told their Priesthood would not be recognised by the Church because of this. But, does the Church's non-recognition of a persons authority invalidate that authority however? No, prophets and apostles have stated such action will be of no effect:

> "Persons sometimes say that they have enjoyed the spirit of the work as much since they were cut off as when they were in the Church. Have they enjoyed the Spirit? Yes. Why? Simply because they were cut off in such a way that it did not take the Spirit of God from them. And the reason why they were cut off was because they did not come up to the particular standard of perfection of those who dealt with them, or they did not come up to their feelings."[37]

In fact President Taylor prophesied that this would happen, as did Joseph Smith -

> "Some of you will be handled and ostracized and cast out from the Church by your brethren because of your faithfulness and integrity to this principle, and some of you will have to surrender your lives because of the same, but woe, woe, unto those who shall bring these troubles upon you."[38]

> "You will live to see men arise in power in the Church who will seek to put down your friends and the friends of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Many will be hoisted because of their money and worldly learning which they seem to be in possession of; and many who are the true followers of our Lord and Saviour will be cast down."[39]

To many Latter-day Saints being cut off from the Church must seem the worst punishment possible, and many of those who receive it undoubtedly do because of their own transgressions. But excommunication itself is a formal ceremony to confirm or dispute alleged misconduct, the act which causes excommunication happens before it ever reaches the Church court, and God makes his judgment at

37 Millennial Star 24:99
38 John Taylor, 27 September 1886.
39 Joseph Smith to Mosiah Hancock, as recorded in his Journal, p. 19

the moment the sin is committed.

However, like any organization, whether ecclesiastical, social or in the world of business, the Church has the right to withhold or withdraw membership to anyone it sees fit. This does not mean however that God will always acknowledge and approve whatever Church leaders do, only on the condition that it is in accordance with his commandments. As He states, "The powers of heaven cannot be controlled or handled, only upon principles of righteousness."[40]

The Priesthood is the authority upon which the Church was organised, the Church does not have power over the Priesthood itself, although it can chose not to recognise a particular persons administrations. It may even say with some certainty that committing certain actions will leave a person without the companionship of the Spirit, the privilege of operating within Church callings, and that God will deprive them of the power of the Priesthood where they are unworthy of it. However, as President John Taylor pointed out, "You cannot take away any man's priesthood without transgression."[41]

The Lord is ultimately the only authority who can make final approval on the actions of someone holding and exercising the Priesthood, and can only be taken away by He who gave the power in the first place, which is something that Church leaders such as Brother Joseph F. Smith once taught and recognised - "No endowments or blessings in the house of the Lord, no patriarchal blessings, no ordination to the Priesthood can be taken away, once given."[42]

Conclusion

Those who had hoped to disprove John Taylor's prophesy regarding the Priesthood and the other statements and events that took place at the same meeting in 1886, can see once again that the doctrines of the Gospel and the prophecies of God's servants cannot be so easily explained away or ignored, but are substantiated again and again.

This may leave many mainstream LDS Church members who might be reading this asking themselves - "If I found that someone in my line of authority was ordained during the period when Priesthood was not conferred properly, or by those who lost the Priesthood because of their actions; then how do I know that my Priesthood authority is valid?" Those in such a situation would be better to have their ordinances re-administered by someone with the correct authority. The Lord before this point may have blessed them with a portion of His Spirit because the intent of their heart was to do His will, but with the

40 Doctrine and Covenants 121:36
41 Times & Seasons 6:922
42 Improvement Era 11:466

knowledge they now have, it is no longer enough, they are now without excuse, and will be accountable for what they have learned.

Following God in such matters may mean coming into conflict with leaders in the Church, but the Lord has always maintained a body of Priesthood willing to live all of His laws at any cost, and there will be many whose names may not be upon the earthly records of the Church but are written in the heavenly Lamb's Book of Life. We can best uphold the Church by maintaining the foundation on which it was built, and keeping alive in our own lives those principles that at the moment the majority do not want or are unable to live.

Jehovah - God the Father or Jesus?

"For thou shalt worship no other God; for the Lord;
whose name is Jehovah, is a jealous God."[1]

Ask the average Latter-day Saint who Jehovah is and they will tell you that it was the name of Jesus before he was born of Mary. However, if you were to ask the same question of a Church member a hundred or so years ago you would have received a very different answer. In fact an early LDS statement of beliefs began, "We believe in God the Father, who is the Great Jehovah ..."[2]

A study of the teachings of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young reveals that neither of them refers to Jesus as Jehovah, but rather used the title Jehovah to refer to God the Father,[3] and that John Taylor even wrote a hymn about Him being such.[4] It may further surprise modern Mormons to find that no General Authority referred to Jesus as Jehovah until the mid-1880s,[5] and that up until the middle of this century LDS leaders were not united on this subject, with David O. McKay referring to "Jehovah and his Son, Jesus."[6]

The word Jehovah itself is derived from the letters JHVH which appear in the Bible over 3000 times, and is represented in the Authorized (King James) Version as "LORD" or "GOD". He was the being to whom the ancient Israelites prayed, and to whom they referred to as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Whenever the words Lord God appear in the Old Testament it refers to Jehovah, and as to who the scriptures say Jehovah is, this article will examine the evidence and provide the answer.

A Vague Passage and a Huge Assumption

One of the most quoted verses, which supporters of the Jesus-Jehovah theory point to as positive proof that Jesus identified himself with being Jehovah is John 5:58:

"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you,

1 Exodus 34:14 JST/IV
2 Times & Seasons 3:358 (or 578?), 15 Nov 1841.
3 Joseph Smith (HC 5:127) - "Jehovah - God - Thou Eloheim - Thy Son Jesus Christ", Brigham Young (BYA, 4 Aug 1867)
4 John Taylor (M&A 150,51 + Sacred Hymns #262) - "Jehovah, God the Father is one / Another His Eternal Son"
5 Franklin D. Richards first taught Jehovah-Jesus in Aug 1885, JD 26:300, In 1895 Wilford Woodruff put it among the mysteries, James E. Talmage popularized idea in 1915 with Jesus the Christ p. 32,38
6 David O. McKay, 1 July 1961, Church News.

Before Abraham was, I am."

They believe that Jesus is here identifying himself with the Jehovah of the Old Testament, who when Moses asked what His name was, said, "I am that I am."[7] However, not all Biblical translators are united as to how this passage in John should be rendered, just as not all scriptural commentators are agreed as to how it should be interpreted. Goodspeed's "American Translation" and Moffatt's version both give the impression that Jesus was saying that he existed prior to the time of Abraham, or as the Jehovah Witnesses' New World edition words it, "Before Abraham came into existence, I have been."[8] The questions which lead to Jesus' reply dealt with age, and not with identity. So wouldn't it be logical to expect that his answer dealt with the length of his existence, rather than an ambiguous reference to him being their God?[9]

Jesus certainly did appear to prophets during the Old Testament period, but his appearances are different from those occasions on which Jehovah (God the Father) made himself manifest. The Saviour's remarks to the Brother of Jared provide us with one such indication that his visits were distinct from those of the Lord God, for he remarked to him that "never have I showed myself unto man" before that point[10]. This raises the question of who was it that visited Enoch and his people over 500 years earlier? Jesus has already stated it couldn't of been him, and yet the books of Genesis, Moses, and the Doctrine and Covenants all state that he was visited by the Lord (Jehovah).[11]

Different Individuals with Similar Characteristics

There are other words applied to Jesus which some believe indicate he is Jehovah. They reason that because a title is given to Jehovah, that if the same or a similar title is applied to Jesus too, they must be one in the same. It is true that both Jesus and Jehovah are spoken of as being a Saviour and Judge for instance, but what is overlooked is that being a savior upon mount Zion is an accolade promised to all of the righteous Saints[12], and that the faithful were told

7 Exodus 3:14

8 The verb 'eimi' (as in 'ego eimi' or 'I am') sometimes does "express existence as a predicate" as Robertson's, "Grammar of the Greek New Testament" points out. The Bible in Worldwide English translates the passage, "I already was before Abraham was born." "I am that I am" can just as legitimately translated, "I will be what I will be"

9 As he expresses in John 17:5.

10 Ether 3:15

11 Moses 7:4 - "And I saw the Lord"; D&C 107:49 - "And he saw the Lord"; See also Genesis 3:8; Moses 6:39 & 7:16

12 Obadiah 1:21, D&C 103:9

they would judge the twelve tribes of Israel[13]. Similarly the term Rock applied to Christ and to the Lord God, yet Peter is also called a 'rock' upon which the Church will be built[14].

Similar Titles & Roles Shared by Others

Jesus	***Jehovah***	***God - Eloheim***	***Saints***
...Is a Saviour	...Is a Saviour	...Is a Saviour	...Are Saviours
Acts 5:31 *1 John 4:14*	*Isa. 43:11,* *Hosea 13:4*	*2 Sam 22:3*	*Obad 1:21,* *D&C 103:9*
...Is a Redeemer	...Is a Redeemer	...Is a Redeemer	...Are Redeemers
Helaman 5:12, *3 Nephi 5:26*	*Ps 78:35*	*Isa 44:24, 54:5*	*D&C 128:22*
...Is a Creator	...Is a Creator	...Is a Creator	...Involved in Creation
Mosiah 3:8, *Helaman 14:12*	*Isa. 40:28*	*Matt 23:6 JST*	*Abraham 3:24*
...Is a Judge	...Is a Judge	...Is a Judge	...Are Judges
Moro 10:34	*Moroni 10:34*	*Psalms 75:7,* *82:8*	*1 Cor 6:2-3*
...Is a Rock	...Is a Rock	...Is a Rock	...Is a Rock
1 Cor 10:4	*Ps 78:35,*	*Deut 32:18, Isa 51:1,* *2 Ne 4:30,35,* *Jacob 7:25*	*Matt 16:18*

In the name of the Father

It is not the intention of this essay to lessen the importance of Jesus in anyones estimation, his role is a unique one, and cannot be over-appreciated. He and His father are one in a way we aspire to be. But it would also be inappropriate to assume he performed acts that his father, Jehovah, is recorded as accomplishing. It is certainly true that He often acted on his Father's behalf, as he tells us himself, "I am come in my Father's name,"[15] and, "the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself but the Father"[16] As a mouthpiece for the Lord he may have repeated his words, and in quoting his Father may have said, "I the Lord God (Jehovah)". Just as the Prophet Joseph or ancient prophets would have done when revealing the word of the Lord.

An example of an angel acting on God's behalf, using his name, and speaking His words, can be seen in the book of Exodus, when Moses

13 1 Corinthians 6:2-3
14 Matthew 16:18
15 John 5:43
16 John 14:10

is on Mount Horeb,[17] and again in God's promises of his protection for the Israelites on their way tot he promised land:

> Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name [is] in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.[18]

Jehovah's servant = Jesus' role

Earlier in this article we touched upon how Jesus acted upon Jehovah's behalf, had come in his name and repeated his words. Continuing with that theme, it is interesting to look at the way Jehovah spoke of Jesus. In the ancient prophetic book of Isaiah, the Lord speaks of a time when a special "servant" will come forward:

> Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.[19]

Who is this servant Jehovah speaks of? The Gospel writer Matthew, quotes this passage to show that He was speaking of non other than Jesus, and that in him the prophecy revealed to Isaiah had been fulfilled.[20] So here we have the first of many occasions in which Jehovah, foretells of the coming of Jesus, whom he also calls His Son in the book of Psalms,[21] whom Paul identifies as being Christ.[22]

Jehovah was the Recipient of Prayers & Object of Worship

Most telling of all is the way in which Jesus refers to Jehovah. Whilst the New Testament does not use the word "Jehovah" itself, there are some occasions on which Jesus and others paraphrase Old Testament passages referring to Him. At one point Jesus even tells his followers, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve",[23] quoting the ancient commandment they would have been familiar with

17 Exodus 3:1-6, and to Abraham in Genesis 22:11+
18 Exodus 23:20-22
19 Isaiah 42:1
20 Matthew 12:17-18
21 Psalms 2:7
22 See Hebrews 1:5
23 Matthew 4:10

from childhood. As they would have been schooled in Hebrew, they would have also undoubtedly known that the original text in Deuteronomy says it is "Jehovah" (JHVH) that they should serve. In fact we know from the scriptural record that all of the Jews and their Israelite cousins would have prayed to the being they considered to be their heavenly Father, Jehovah. This leads us to the quote that prefaced the first part of this article:

> For thou shalt worship no other god; for the Lord, whose name is Jehovah, is a jealous God.[24]

This version is slightly different than we have it in our King James version, where it says that His name is "jealous", an obvious mistranslation which Joseph Smith corrected in his inspired revision of the passage. Other Biblical passages also teach this, such as Zechariah 8:22 that tells the Israelites "to pray before the LORD [Jehovah]."

Old Testament Descriptions of Jehovah

Since it is the Old Testament which refers to Jehovah the most, and since Jehovah is considered the God of the ancient Israelites who lived before the appearance of Christ, the books of scripture which cover that period are undoubtedly the best source for discovering about the character and identity of Jehovah.

In fact the ancient scriptures speak of those who walked and talked with Jehovah, prophets who knew of Him from firsthand experience. Did they describe him as the spirit Jesus would have been, as a member of the Godhead, or as a unique Son of a heavenly Father?

A Divine Personage with a Physical Body

Moses, in his record, writes that "the Lord spake unto" him "face to face" and "mouth to mouth," and saw his "back parts"[25] Was this just the image of a face he speaks of? Perhaps, but how would we explain the fact that Jehovah also "delivered unto" him "two tables of stone written with the finger of God;"? How does a spiritual being physically write and lift stone tablets?

This alone may not be enough for some to establish that Jehovah was an embodied and exalted being, but there is one role He the Old Testament prophets say He fulfilled which Jesus did not and could not: That is, being the Father of our spirits.

Jehovah was the Father of our Spirits

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24 JST Exodus 34:14

25 Exodus 33:11, 23, Numbers 12:8

The scriptures speak for themselves on this issue. They talk of "the LORD [Jehovah], the God of the spirits of all flesh,"[26] that we "are the children of the LORD [Jehovah]"[27] and that He "giveth breath unto the people" upon the earth "and spirit to them that walketh therein"[28] as He "formeth the spirit of man within Him."[29]

In one of the most quoted verses about the pre-existence it is Jehovah who says, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee;"[30] Jesus, although special amongst God's children, was not the Father of our spirits, but Jehovah was. What other conclusion can we come to, except that Jesus was not Jehovah!

Jesus did indeed come in His Father's name, and has acted on His behalf, so it is easy to see why some have supposed Jesus and Jehovah are the same person. In the early days of the Church the apostles - although sometimes referring God the Father as Jehovah - probably never saw the need to explain this doctrine, as the rest or the Christian world equated the Almighty with Jehovah already. As time went on this perhaps lead to ambiguity, with some General Authorities applying the title both to the Saviour and God, and then later other leaders used it exclusively to speak of Christ. The teachings of the scriptures, have not changed over time however.

What Jehovah Was & Jesus Wasn't

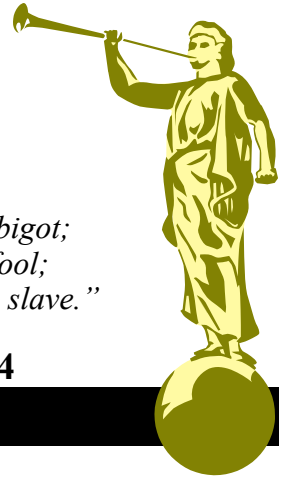
Jesus	***Jehovah (LORD / GOD)***
...Didn't have a physical body	...Did have a physical body
	Exo 24:11, 33:11, Deut 9:10
...No one should pray to	...Israelites prayed to
	"Pray before the Lord [Jehovah]" *Zech 8:22*
...Wasn't head of Gods	...Was head of Gods
	"The Lord [Jehovah] God of the Gods" *Josh 22:22. Deut 6:4-5*
...Wasn't Father of spirits	...Was the Father of our spirits
	"The Lord [Jehovah] which formeth the spirit of man within him" *Zech 12:1, Jer 1:4-5, Isa 42:5, Deut 14:1*
...Didn't appear to anyone before Mahonri	...Appeared to Enoch 500 years earlier
Ether 3:15	*Gen 3:8, Moses 6:39, Moses 7:4*

26 Numbers 27:16
27 Deuteronomy 14:1
28 Isaiah 42:5
29 Zechariah 12:1
30 Jeremiah 1:5

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel

"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."



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Who Holds the Keys?

Principles of authority and succession

> "it is necessary to know who holds the keys of power, and who does not or we are likely to be deceived." *(Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 336)*

Most orthodox LDS Church members and Mormon Fundamentalists accept Joseph Smith, Brigham Young and John Taylor as Prophets, Church Presidents, and Presidents of the Priesthood, all holding the keys of Elijah (or the authority to preside over all of the ordinances). Past this point there has been some controversy over Wilford Woodruff to Joseph F. Smith and beyond.[1]

For those studying the fullness of the Gospel who realise the need for the authority to live the higher laws and ordinances of the Gospel this can lead to confusion: Have the keys of the Priesthood continued to our day and how can we judge who holds them? The best - if not the only source - our Latter-day Saint readers will accept is the teachings of and revelations to those Prophets we all agree on the calling and authority of. If we claim authority through Joseph Smith and say we believe in the word of the Lord to him, then there is no better place to begin to study these matters than with the Doctrine and Covenants.

A continuation of the keys of the Priesthood

The first question we need to address is whether the Lord has promised that the keys of the Priesthood would continue throughout this dispensation. God answered this within the same year of the organization of the Church and just a year following Joseph receiving the Priesthood from Peter, James and John, when He promised that the "keys of my kingdom" were committed "for the last times; and for the fullness of times."[2] He later informed the Prophet that it would be those keys "committed unto man" that would allow the gospel to "roll forth ... until it has filled the whole earth."[3] As those times have not yet come, the keys must remain to fulfil God's promises and purposes.

But is it still possible those keys could have been lost if the Lord's prophet 'fell' and disqualified himself? The Lord has allowed for such a possibility, and made the provision that even in a situation where the

1 Just as Mormonism found itself with many people claiming to be Joseph's successor after his death, likewise most Fundamentalists accept John and Lorin Woolley (Because of the authority they received through John Taylor in September 1886) as leaders appointed by God, but after Lorin's death there arose many men claiming to be his successor, or to have authority independently of him.

2 Doctrine and Covenants 27:13

3 Doctrine and Covenants 65:2

man holding the keys might become unworthy of his calling, that responsibility would pass to someone who was qualified and who had received that authority through him:

> "But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto you to receive commandments and revelations until he be taken, if he abide in me.
>
> But verily, verily, I say unto you, that none else shall be appointed unto this gift except it be through him; for if it be taken from him he shall not have power except to appoint another in his stead.
>
> For verily I say unto you, that he that is ordained of me shall come in at the gate and be ordained as I have told you before, to teach those revelations which you have received and shall receive through him whom I have appointed."[4]

Worthiness, however, is not the only condition upon which those who claim to hold the keys and preside over them must meet.

A continuation of ordinances, and laws

The Prophet Joseph clearly taught the Saints that all the ordinances of the Gospel were "instituted in heaven before the foundation of this world in the Priesthood for the salvation of man," that they were "not to be altered or changed," and that "all must be saved upon the same principles." He added that they "must be kept in the very way God has appointed; otherwise their Priesthood will prove a cursing instead of a blessing."[5]

Even Joseph Smith's Priesthood authority was dependent upon him receiving all of the ordinances in the manner that God restored them, as we can see from the Lord's promise to him that "the keys of the mysteries of the kingdom shall not be taken from" him "while he liveth, inasmuch as he obeyeth mine ordinances."[6]

If this was a condition upon which Joseph's authority rested then it would also be a test by which we can judge anyone who claims to be his successor and hold the keys he did. Have they received all the ordinances, and kept them "in the very way God has appointed," or are there ordinances they have not received or changes they have tried to make to those they have? Could any man ever have the right to perform an ordinances he had not received? Brigham Young posed this same question to the Saints of his day:

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4 Doctrine and Covenants 43:4

5 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 168-9, see Heb 7:12

6 Doctrine and Covenants 64:5

> "Can any man or set of men officiate in dispensing the laws and administering the ordinances of the Kingdom of God or of the kingdoms and governments of the world legally, without first obeying those laws and submitting to those ordinances themselves? ... do not forget that no man has authority to officiate in the ordinances of heavenly or earthly governments only so far as he has obeyed them himself."[7]

That keeping alive such ordinances is necessary to hold and exercise the keys of the Priesthood is something Joseph Smith explained very plainly in his day:

> "The spirit, power, and calling of Elijah is, that ye have power to hold the key of the revelation, ordinances, oracles, powers and endowments of the fullness of the Melchizedek Priesthood and of the kingdom of God on the earth; and to receive, obtain, and perform all the ordinances belonging to the kingdom of God"[8]

He was also by the Lord that if he did not introduce a principle he would lose any authority he already had:

> "An angel of God ... told him that, unless he moved forward and establish plural marriage, his Priesthood would be taken from him."[9]

Likewise Heber C. Kimball was told by the Prophet that if he did not take another wife "he would lose his Apostleship."[10] This was not just a condition placed upon Brothers Joseph and Heber, but upon all the Apostles:

> "When this commandment was given, it was so far religious, and so far binding upon the Elders of this Church, that it was told them if they were not prepared to enter into it, and to stem the torrent of opposition that would come in consequence of it, the keys of the kingdom would be taken from them and given to others."[11]

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7 Manuscript Addresses of Brigham Young, October 8th, 1854
8 History of the Church 6:251
9 Eliza R. Snow, Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow, p. 69-70
10 Life of Heber C. Kimball, Orson F. Whitney, p. 336 (1888 edition)
11 John Taylor, 7 June 1866, Journal of Discourses 11:221-222

The necessity of living this high and holy law to be able to preside over the Priesthood was repeated again by the Lord to his servant John Taylor in 1882, in which He said:

> "Thus saith the Lord to the Twelve, and to the Priesthood and people of my Church: ... You may appoint Seymour B. Young to fill up the vacancy in the presiding quorum of Seventies, if he will conform to My law: For it is not meet that men who will not abide My law shall preside over My Priesthood; ... For my Priesthood, whom I have called and whom I have sustained and honored, shall honor one and obey my laws, and the laws of my Holy Priesthood, or they shall not be considered worthy to hold my Priesthood, saith the Lord."[12]

Some might ask, as undoubtedly some of the Saints did during President Taylor's tenure, "apart from the exalting purpose of this divine law, why was it so essential to the issue of Priesthood authority?" To this he plainly answered that "a man obeying a lesser law is not qualified to preside over those who keep a higher law."[13]

A continuation of Apostleship and the Fullness of the Priesthood

Although "all Priesthood is Melchizedek",[14] the Lord has designated different offices with specific commissions as well as special callings which both grant and limit the responsibilities of those called. The highest of all the offices within the Priesthood is that of Apostle, which comprehends all other offices.

They "hold the keys to open up the authority" of God's kingdom,[15] they can "ordain and set in order all the other officers of the church"[16] They were acknowledged as "Prophets, Seers, Revelators, and special witnesses to all the nations of the earth, holding the keys of the kingdom"[17] and were "enabled to unlock and unravel all things pertaining to the government of the Church, the welfare of society, the future destiny of men, and the agency, power and influence of spirits;"[18]

However, even being an Apostle does not necessarily given a person all of the authority or keys of the Priesthood. The Prophet Joseph taught that there were different degrees within the Melchizedek

12 Revelation to John Taylor, 13 October 1882, Unpublished Revelations 83:4-5,15
13 John Taylor, Life of Wilford Woodruff, Matthias F. Cowley, p. 542
14 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 180
15 Doctrine and Covenants 124:128
16 Doctrine and Covenants 107:58
17 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 109
18 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 206, see p. 74

Priesthood itself, and it wasn't until the autumn of 1843 that he was "anointed and ordained to the highest and holiest order of the Priesthood."[19] This was fourteen years after he first received the Priesthood and became an Apostle himself,[20] eight years after the formation of the Quorum of Twelve,[21] seven after he received the keys of the Priesthood in the Kirtland Temple,[22] and a year after he first received the Endowment![23] He left us in no doubt that this authority was essential and that the Lord intended it to continue:

> "My feelings at the present time are that, inasmuch as the Lord Almighty has preserved me until today, He will continue to preserve me, by the united faith and prayers of the Saints, until I have fully accomplished my mission in this life, and so firmly established the dispensation of the fullness of the priesthood in the last days, that all the powers of earth and hell can never prevail against it."[24]

Not all of the Apostles or members of the First Presidency were considered ready or worthy to obtain this before Joseph's death, and because of this Brigham Young could rightly claim greater authority than Sidney Rigdon (who had not received that degree of Priesthood) and William Marks (who was not living all of God's laws). Heber C. Kimball told Rigdon at the time that "He has no authority, only what he receives from the Church. ... He has not got the same authority as others: there are more than thirty men who have got higher authority than he has."[25]

Those Apostles and others who received this ordinance were considered the elect of God and members of the Church of the Firstborn,[26] a higher organisation with a greater mandate than the earthly LDS Church. Those who had not received this authority – no matter what their office in the Church – were considered subordinate to the quorum these Saints were members of, as is illustrated by a letter of the Twelve to William Smith:

> "the President of the Church and each of our Quorum [of Twelve Apostles] are amenable to the Quorum of

19 Joseph Smith Diary, 18 September 1843
20 Joseph Smith is called an Apostle in D&C 20:2 & Doctrine and Covenants 21:1.
21 14 February 1835
22 Doctrine and Covenants 110
23 May 1842
24 History of the Church 5:139
25 Times and Seasons 5:663, see Trial of Sidney Rigdon, 8 September 1844. Note: Heber called those with higher authority "the secret Priesthood", see William Clayton diary, 23 May 1843
26 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 237

which you are a member."[27]

This raises a question we musk ask those who claim to have all the authority that is necessary to administer the ordinances of exaltation, "Do they have the fullness of the Priesthood?" A man can only receive a fullness of the Priesthood from someone else who has, and it is only valid if they have received all necessary ordinances of the temple first, as Joseph taught that -

> "If a man gets a fullness of the priesthood of God he has to get it in the same way that Jesus Christ obtained it, and that was by keeping all the commandments and obeying all the ordinances of the house of the Lord."[28]

Heber Kimball wouldn't mention the names of those "who have got authority" in Nauvoo as he feared "the enemy will try to kill them."[29] President Young was also worried about this prospect, but was determined that whatever happened to him the authority should continue.

> "I know there are those in our midst who will seek the lives of the Twelve as they did the lives of Joseph and Hyrum. We shall ordain others and give the fullness of the priesthood, so that if we are killed the fullness of the priesthood may remain."[30]

It was paramount to keep that ordinance alive, because through it the highest and fullest degree of Priesthood was given, and without it no one could gain their exaltation or have the authority to exercise the full keys of the Priesthood and preside over them.

A continual and uninterrupted line of succession

God's "house is a house of order"[31] and whenever He has had men with authority upon the earth, one of them, by reason of seniority or special appointment has presided, and stood as an administrator and judge over all of the ordinances and laws of the Gospel. This is the pattern designated in the word of the Lord in which God states, "it must needs be that one be appointed of the High Priesthood to preside over the priesthood ... from the same comes the administering of ordinances

27 Letter of the Twelve to William Smith, Succession in the Presidency, B.H. Roberts, p. 23
28 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 308
29 Trial of Sidney Rigdon, 8 September 1844
30 Brigham Young, History of the Church 7:230
31 Doctrine and Covenants 132:8

and blessings"[32] There is only one man who occupies that presiding position at any one time,[33] and (as we pointed out at the beginning of our treatment of this subject), the Lord has designed that there will be a continual and uninterrupted line of men holding these keys until Jesus returns.

When assessing the claims of those who would call themselves Joseph Smith's successor as head of the Priesthood and holder of its keys, we have a right and responsibility to ask ourselves if they meet the criteria given in the scriptures and teachings of the prophets. Can they show:

- A continuation of administering all the same ordinances unchanged
- A continuation of maintaining the same laws, and living them
- A continuation of living and keeping alive Celestial Plural Marriage
- A continuation of the office of Apostle
- A continuation of the fullness of the Priesthood
- A continual and uninterrupted line of authority and succession from Joseph Smith to them

If they can satisfy all of these requirements then there is only one thing left for us to do, and that is to pray to the Lord for a spiritual witness that this person is the Lord's anointed Prophet (if our study of these areas has not already led us to that testimony), and to join with those Saints who share our faith, so that we can build up God's kingdom with them, and prove ourselves worthy of receiving all of God's ordinances and living all His laws.

32 Doctrine and Covenants 107:65,67

33 "there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of this priesthood are conferred" (Doctrine and Covenants 132:7)

The Fragile Faith

Faith itself, is a gift from God, but as with any gift it can be lost. Fortunately for us God seems to have an inexhaustible supply. However developing faith takes time and effort. (When we speak of faith, we are not referring to a specific religion, but of an individual's belief in and devotion to it, and most importantly to God.)

Without faith it is impossible to please God, because no matter what good a person does if they do not recognize the being that made

them and that without Him they can achieve nothing that will last throughout the eternities. Whatever is built by human hands will one day fall, but faith will never fail those who put their trust in it.

Faith is not a gift to be forgotten about, or to be only used when convenient. It is like a tool, which those who use it most often and most wisely can become skillful in. When a person uses it that much and that well they are far less likely to misplace it, and they are far more likely to understand the power of faith, and have a more complete knowledge about what they have faith in.

Some seem scared to use faith too much though, or they are very delicate in its use as if they are afraid of breaking it. Some it seems do indeed hold a fragile faith which is less able to cope with some challenges, whist those whose faith is built on a firmer foundation that can stand up to and pass through such difficulties. This happens either because they let their fears weaken their faith, or because they don't put forward the effort to increase their faith. In avoiding anything they perceive may challenge their faith, they also avoid that which would strengthen it. A fragile faith fears challenge, it limits itself to thinking within certain constraints, and never considering some possibilities.

Those leaders of religions who wish to protect others with a fragile faith may try to limit what their members read, and what their historians and scholars write. However, those with a fragile faith usually will self-censor themselves, not just against the immoral, but also the controversial. They are very unlikely to read the books of religious historians or scholars, unless they are novelizations, or are highly sanitized versions recommended or published by their religious leaders.

Some hold the assumption that the founders of their religion and early followers were perfect, or very near so, and that suggestions otherwise are blasphemous at worst or at least highly disrespectful. But the Bible presents us with a faithful history, one inspired by God, and yet in it are accounts of prophets who fell from grace, the faults of those who served God, and how His people sometimes became wayward.

Always catering to those weaker in the faith can leave those whose faith is strong without an avenue to express themselves, afraid they will have action taken against them by their ministers or be seen as troublemakers. They know that the faithful men and women of the past were similar to them, and take solace and strength from learning how they went through similar challenges, whereas others might falter if they were to find out such information.

Should we always be protecting those weak in the faith against the 'strong'? Indeed, how will the weak ever become strong if they are constantly protected, and who will be left to defend the faith if no-one is allowed to read others criticisms against it? What would be the result of such a stance? The outside world will see a people afraid of challenge,

those for whom misunderstandings prove a stumbling block, who will never have those concerns removed, because no member can contemplate them.

This is not to suggest though that we should go out of our way to instruct members in every controversy, as our faith cannot be merely a response to others accusations against us, nor should it be centred on the verbal persecution we receive. But if we ignore completely such things then we may be encouraging falsehoods and misinterpretations to continue.

But some members take offense so easily and take such offenses so seriously that they can lose what little faith they had very quickly. Those with a fragile faith sometimes also confuse different opinions with apostasy, and disagreement with persecution. A discussion might be mistaken as an attack by such a person, and they will avoid the very appearance of controversy like the plague. Thus the very study and resultant knowledge that might strengthen their faith is ignored or even condemned.

Sometimes the seeming need to create a good impression to those weaker in the faith and those outside investigating it, can lead to sins being overlooked or covered up that could draw negative attention to the Church. Thus this gives the impression to the perpetrator (although unintentionally) that he is either approved of, or that he is immune to serious repercussions, and gives the victim the impression that what happened was alright, or even that they were wrong to bring attention to it. When protecting the good name of a religion becomes paramount, evil ends up being overlooked or allowed.

Of course there are sins that have become common (if they have not always been so) in the world, and which also happen far too often amongst all religious societies, no matter how strict. Those religions that look better, that seem to be exempt from such problems, may just be more effective at public relations or may have a larger influence in politics or the media.

Some religions seem so afraid of offending their members or potential converts that they fail to condemn many sins, especially common ones that may be socially acceptable in the world. In seeking acceptance they fail to stand up for God's standards, and fearing persecution they cease to proclaim the truth. By taking such a course a religion may ultimately end up as fragile as the faith of its members.

There is no lasting substitute for a faith based on a firm foundation, that comes through meeting - rather than avoiding - the challenges life brings, and the awkward questions that encourage one to consider their beliefs more deeply. But sadly some will realize too late, that the confidence that comes with strong faith, the spirituality that attends it, and its blessings and ultimate rewards, will forever remain elusive to those who live by and die with a fragile faith.

Changes in Sacrament Administration

It is called the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Holy Communion, the Eucharist, and the Memorial Meal. Its emblems are taken in remembrance of the Saviour's blood and body, and according to the Catholic doctrine of Transubstantiation they are actually transformed literally into those substances.[1] Students of the WatchTower (Jehovah Witnesses) believe it should only be imparted to God's 144,000 High Priests who will rule in heaven with Him, and most other churches limit its receipt to only those admitted into their fellowship through an act of conversion or similar commitment. Some see it appropriate for it to be administered daily, others weekly on a Saturday or Sunday, monthly, or only annually upon the day in the Jewish calender it was first introduced.

It is a principle universal to almost all forms of Christianity,[2] and practiced in at least some form throughout nearly all of its branches. Many see it as a successor or fulfillment to the ancient Paschal feasts of the sacrificial lamb and unleavened bread instituted by Moses[3], yet there are still those who who keep that tradition alongside the ordinance instituted by the Saviour.[4] Its importance is such that unworthily partaking of it causes great condemnation before God,[5] and its proper consumption and the state of mind which accompanies this can bring innumerable blessings, among which includes the participant being brought spiritually closer to God.

To Latter-Day Saints it is the focal point of their Sunday service, and all other activities upon the Sabbath day are just a preparation for it. It is blessed with words which remind the members when they partake that they are also renewing their covenants with their Father in Heaven, an understanding lost to the rest of the Christian world. It is handled in reverence, and taken with solemnity. Scarcely a meeting goes by without its meaning and significance being mentioned, yet there is one area in which the Saints are not as generally well acquainted; the reasons and history behind the method of its administration.

Some might contend that how it is (and was) given is not as important as why, but there is a symbolism portrayed, which, if recognized can help us gain a better insight into the importance of this ordinance, as well as showing us the role it can play in our salvation, and the necessity of it being administered correctly.

Who can administer the Sacrament?

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1 Interestingly Martin Luther believed that it was elements of the spiritual body of Jesus that were consumed instead, which belief is called Consubstantiation.

2 Except Quakers and the Salvation Army

3 Exodus 12

4 Such as the Seventh Day Adventists, Worldwide Church of God, and Messianic Jews.

5 3 Nephi 18:29 & Mormon 9:29

The Oxford Dictionary states that when the word 'administer' is used in an ecclesiastical sense it is referring to giving out or performing the rites of an essential ordinance. Most of the synonyms associated with this word denote the directing of an event, and the implementation and execution of it. Therefore, it would be difficult to argue that 'administering' this ordinances in no way includes preparing, collecting and distributing the emblems and the vessels they are carried in. Thus those who pass the Sacrament also administer it to the Saints, just as those who bless it do.

The earliest reference we have to specific Priesthood offices being designated to be involved in the administration of the Lord's Supper is in the Book of Mormon, in which Mormon instructs his son Moroni in the proper wording and responsibilities of this ordinance. He makes it clear who took part in his day:

> "The manner of their Elders and Priests administering the flesh and blood of Christ unto the Church; and they administered it according to the commandments of Christ; wherefore we know the manner to be true; and the Elder or Priest did minister it."[6]

These instructions were repeated by the Lord in Section 20 of the Doctrine and Covenants, but also with a statement about which Aaronic Priesthood offices could not take part:

> "But neither Teachers nor Deacons have authority to baptize, administer the sacrament, or lay on hands;"[7]

The duties of these offices as defined in the preceeding verses (53-57) give no indication either that Deacons or Teachers have any responsibilty involving the Sacrament, and no other revelation has been given stating that that task falls upon them in any way. The designation of young boys as Deacons and Teachers and involving them in the Sacrament was introduced much later.[8]

In the Church today everyone who attends is involved in the administration of the Sacrament, when the Deacons or Teachers pass it to the members, the members then pass it to each other along the rows, regardless of whether they are male or female, children or adults, or if they have the Priesthood or not.

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6 Moroni 4:1

7 Doctrine and Covenants 20:58

8 See Francis M. Lyman, Proceedings of the first Sunday School convention, p. 75 (1898) for one of the first encouragements of this. However, also see Parley P. Pratt, Times & Seasons 1:4:95, August 1840 – although most accounts of Deacons passing the Sacrament seem to begin in the 1920s.

Blessed then broken, or broken then blessed?

From the days of Moses, the Jews in commemoration of their deliverance from death whilst in Egypt, would sacrifice a lamb to begin their remembrance of the Passover. They would anoint it and break it. This order seems to be more in keeping with the passover meal of the sacrificial lamb, and the symbolism associated with it, which was fulfilled with Jesus being blessed (anointed) and broken (in heart) upon the cross in that order.[9]

> "And as they did eat, Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them, and said, Take it, and eat."[10]

In keeping with this order Mormon Fundamentalists follow that same pattern. However it must be admitted that there are some examples in the scriptures of the bread being broken and then blessed instead:

> "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and brake it and blessed it, and gave to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is in remembrance of my body which I give a ransom for you."[11]

> "And when the disciples had come with bread and wine, he took of the bread and brake and blessed it; ... Behold there shall one be ordained among you, and to him will I give power that he shall break bread and bless it. ... And this shall ye always observe to do, even as I have done, even as I have broken bread and blessed it and given it unto you."[12]

In this case Jesus broke then blessed the bread, but after he gave his Nephite disciples portions of the bread, they again then blessed it, and went on to break it again for the congregation present. So it would seem from this example that there was nothing improper in breaking it before blessing it as the LDS Church now does, or in blessing it first as the Fundamentalists do, and in both cases it appears to have been valid, presumably because the bread had been blessed before anyone actually partook of it.

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9 Matt 26:7;Mark 14:3;John 12:3 & John 19:34
10 JST Mark 14:20, see also Luke 22:19, JST Luke 24:29
11 JST Matthew 26:22, see alsoJST Genesis 14:17-18
12 3 Nephi 18:3,5-6, see also 3 Nephi 20:2

Drinking from a Common Cup

Jesus, at the last supper used his own cup to pass around the wine with, rather than providing new cups for each of the Apostles or blessing the wine already within their glasses:

> "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;"[13]

Mormon likewise instructed his son to use a common cup when he referred to the Sacrament administrations of his day, and the Lord repeated the exact same language to the Prophet Joseph:

> "The manner of administering the wine - he shall take the cup also, and say:"[14]

Despite the symbolism associated with drinking from the same cup such as the fellowship, covenants, and reliance on the atonement we share, in 1911 individual water cups replaced the common one within the Church.[15]

Should Use All of It

Observant readers will note that in all the accounts of Jesus administering the wine He instructs them to drink "all of it". Indeed it was once the practice of the Church to consume all of the bread and water, the pattern having been to pass the Sacrament around until finished. I have been informed by a man who served as Bishop in the Church some years ago that at one point the Deacons took responsibility of finishing it off in front on the congregation, then (as late as ten years ago) they would eat it after the meeting, but that now they were prevented from doing so – even if they wanted to – and it was either disposed of in the garbage or even thrown to the birds.

No Impropriety in Using Wine

Whenever the scriptures mention the beverage drunk in commemoration of the blood of Jesus it is always wine used, with the only exception being the following verse -

> "Wherefore, a commandment I give unto you, that you shall not purchase wine neither strong drink of your enemies;

13 Matthew 26:27

14 Doctrine and Covenants 20:78

15 At least one branch of the Congregational Church first using individual cups in 1893, although resisted by some Protestant churches at first it is now quite common.

> Wherefore, you shall partake of none except it is made new among you;"[16]

But the passage states this only applies when the Saints are unable to produce wine themselves. As further proof of this, after this revelation was received the Saints involved didn't actually use water, but instead found some home-made wine to take.[17]

A later revelation as well as the History of the Church[18] attest to the fact that it was wine that was normally used for the Sacrament, with water only being a rare exception. In fact the Lord made it clear that the wine used in the Lord's supper was exempt from the health code of the Word of Wisdom:

> "That inasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold it is not good, neither meet in the sight of your Father, only in assembling yourselves together to offer up your sacraments before him."[19]

The Church did not begin a policy of using water instead of wine until 1906, and only then in the temple.[20] The universal use of water came later.

Those Administering Should Take First

In 1946 a tradition that had grown in the Church became an official policy when wards were instructed that the Sacrament should be passed to presiding officers sitting on the stand first.[21] This was not always the order in which it was given though, as we can see from the example of Jesus to his Nephite disciples:

> "...and he gave unto the disciples and commanded that they should eat. And when they had eaten and were filled, he commanded that they should give unto the multitude."[22]

Whilst it is true that the Apostles were the highest Priesthood holders, more importantly they were the ones administering the ordinance, and as administrators of that ordinance they presided over it.

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16 Doctrine and Covenants 27:3-4
17 "there is no known reference to a liquid other than wine being used for the Sacrament during Smith's lifetime" (Gregory Prince, Power from on High, p. 96)
18 Doctrine and Covenants 88:140-141; History of the Church 2:430-31.
19 Doctrine and Covenants 89:5
20 John Henry Smith Journal, 5 July 1906
21 David O. McKay, Conference report, April 1946, p. 116
22 3 Nephi 18:3-5 (see 20:2-3)

From the journals of the early Saints we see that this was the order that they always followed, even if the one administering was a Priest and the President of the Church was on the stand. The officer blessing took it first, and then those passing, followed by the rest of the Saints in no order of preference, even if it meant the Church President received it last. It is those blessing who have been appointed to preside over that ordinance, and continue to do so until it has been passed to all of the Saints.

Only Church members Should Partake

Worthiness is of course the greatest prerequisite to partaking of the emblems, and the Lord leaves no doubt of his displeasure if we should eat them unworthily,[23] but this does not mean that worthiness alone was the only requirement. The Sacrament is also an opportunity to renew our baptismal covenants, a commitment which presupposes that we have received those covenants and understand them in the first place. This fact was witnessed by Jesus, Mormon and the Lord in a revelation to Joseph Smith:

> "... he shall break bread and bless it and give it unto the people of my church, unto all those who shall believe and be baptized in my name.
>
> ... if it so be that he repenteth and is baptized in my name, then shall ye receive him, and shall minister unto him of my flesh and blood."[24]

> "And they ["the Church" see v.5] did meet together oft to partake of bread and wine, in remembrance of the Lord Jesus."[25]

> "The duty of the members **after** they are received by baptism ... previous to their partaking of the sacrament and being confirmed by the laying on of the hands of the elders, so that all things may be done in order."[26]

Although some contentious missionaries may instruct their investigators to wait to take the Sacrament until they have been baptized, it has become very common for Church members to encourage their unbaptized children to take it. The scriptures we have seen leave no room for that interpretation though.

We have looked solely at the areas in which the Sacrament as now

23 See fn. 5
24 3 Nephi 18:5,30, see v. 11
25 Moroni 6:6
26 Doctrine and Covenants 20:68

administered in the LDS Church differs from the Lord's instructions in the scriptures, but there are many other areas in which the ordinance has been altered over the years.

- Just like with baptism, another Aaronic Priesthood ordinance which Priests can perform, the right hand was held to the square when the blessing took place (and sometimes even both arms as can be seen from an early photograph of a Sunday meeting), and this continued in some LDS wards up until the 1980s when the Church ended it completely.

- It was once not so unusual once to have the Lord's supper on other days besides Sunday, such as on the first Thursday of every month which was the traditional day of fast meetings until the late 19th century. In fact the very first time the Sacrament was ever administered in this dispensation was on a Tuesday!

- It was also usual to have speakers or musical items during the passing of the Sacrament, but in 1946 the Church abolished this in favour of silence. Nor was it uncommon for families to sometimes have Sacrament at home, although to do this now without the Bishop's permission would land most LDS Church members in trouble.

Of course it might be argued that some of these may have been merely traditions, but those aspects of this ordinance which are clearly taught in the scriptures cannot be ignored without removing important symbolism, without displeasing the Lord, and without the ordinance losing some of its effectiveness. Fortunately there are those who understand the importance of these things and have kept this ordinance in the way the Lord revealed it within His word.[27]

27 Note: Some details in this article came from the CES conference paper, "The Little-Known Unfolding of Priesthood and Church Government" by John F. Cary

A Conversation with Lucifer

Samuel H. Roundy, a member of the Church who lived in Salt Lake City in the early part of this century, relates an interesting dream wherein he had a conversation with Lucifer. In that experience Lucifer admitted his continuing desire to deceive the Saints. While the dream was a personal experience, it nevertheless illustrates how Satan's purpose is to deceive the Saints and destroy the work of the Savior:

In the year 1925 about February 15th, I found myself one night sitting on one side of a table in my home and Lucifer sitting on the other side. How he came I saw not. I immediately asked this question:

Roundy: Lucifer why do you seek to destroy and tear down the good works of the Saviour?
Lucifer: That is my mission.... It was then just like two political parties now. The party that is defeated still thinks its' platform the best. I not only think my plan is the best, but I claim Jesus stole my crown and I am doing all I can to over throw his work. We have one very important advantage over the Saints.
Roundy: I asked in what way?
Lucifer: Just think a moment, said he.
Roundy: Suddenly it came to me. Oh, yes, I understand, it is this; when our Spirits entered our mortal bodies we lost the knowledge we had in the pre-existent state and you and your followers, not having the privilege of entering mortal bodies, retained that knowledge, therefore, you knew from the beginning the life-mission of all the great men.
Lucifer: Yes, he said, and we in every instance try to destroy them so as to prevent God's work through them.
Roundy: I have believed for many years it was you that sought to destroy Moses, Cyrus, Abraham, The Saviour and Joseph Smith while they were young, but you failed, did you not?
Lucifer: Yes, I did, but we know and understand Jesus's plan and doctrines just as well or better than do the Saints. We are just as perfectly organized as you, and are working more faithful than you are.
Roundy: Yes, so l understand, and I also understand that you send out missionaries, hold your conferences, receive reports, etc., that you also have a priesthood.
Lucifer: Yes, I have a priesthood. We send our agents out two and two as you do. We send our best informed to the authorities who preside over the people, also around the temples to discourage the temple work. We also hold our conferences, hear reports, attend to the business and pair them off and send them out again.
Roundy: I said, while you hold a priesthood you must obey the

priesthood of God. Must you not? In answering this question he emphasized it very much and said:

Lucifer: Only when it is exercised in faith, do I.

Roundy: Then as your agents travel among the people, you and your agents know everything that is going on, don't you? especially among the Latter-day Saints-know all about their financial condition, social relations, etc.?

Lucifer: Yes, my agents have all things necessary and report to me.

Roundy: Then with this knowledge in your possession you are the author of spiritualism, mediumism, slate writings and all things connected therewith.

Lucifer: Yes sir, we have all knowledge necessary, and we can impersonate and imitate any person, so, when the spiritualists call for a certain person, my servants answer, having the information required.

Roundy: You said in the beginning of this conversation that it was your mission to destroy the works of Jesus Christ. Now with the perfect organization that you have, you are, as it has been said, everywhere present. Is this true?

Lucifer: Yes, it is our mission to overthrow all that leads to purity and Godliness, and we are everywhere present, especially in the sick room where the priesthood is, we are there to offset their power, and as thoughts are seeds sown, we do all we can to put evil thoughts into the minds of the people, especially the young; then teach them to cultivate those evil thoughts as they grow up to manhood and womanhood.

When the Sons of God met I was present, and when God would have you do good. we cause you to think evil. This has been our mission from the beginning, to overcome good with evil. We knew when Joseph Smith was to come and we did all in our power to destroy him, but failed. Also you claim you must overcome evil with good. This is the conflict called the battle of the end, the time of times of the End.

Roundy: Do you believe that all the Latter-day Saints are seeking the glory of God ?

Lucifer: No sir, I do not. All, who are seeking the praise of man, the pleasure of the world, and the almighty dollar, are coming my way and that is the majority of them....

Roundy: 6000 years was the time allotted you for the establishment of your kingdom, was it not?

Lucifer: Yes sir, that was, or is, the allotted time.

Roundy: Then you must know that your end is near.

Lucifer: Yes, I do, but I want to tell you before I am bound, every person that can be led astray will be, and as far as I can, I am going to accomplish my work through the women from now on, and everything in this world will be turned upside down before I am bound. *(See Revelation 20:1-3)*

Roundy: ... I will say he did not seem to become vexed at any time during our conversation. Just how long it lasted I cannot tell. It seems about one-half the night. I did not see him come or leave.

S. H. Roundy (Signed)

Unpublished Manuscript ,
Church Historical Department

Singing in Tongues

A long forgotten spiritual gift

Although currently unheard of in the LDS Church, and not very common in mainstream Christian Churches, the subject of singing in tongues or "singing in spirit" as it sometimes referred to, does come up occasionally amongst Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians. Looking at references to it on the Internet, it seems that in a few such congregations it may even be a regular occurrence, whereas in most others it may only be occasionally speculated about.

The belief that God can and does inspire Christians to sing in an unknown tongue is usually derived from an epistle of Paul, in which he states, "I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also."[1]. Presumably singing "with the Spirit" is interpreted to mean, singing as led to by God's Spirit, rather than by using prewritten hymns. Perhaps it is supposed that when the Spirit speaks directly to us, it is in language unknown to humans, except those inspired to interpret it. Paul may again be alluding to this in the book of Romans, as he explains, "the Spirit itself maketh intercessions for us with groanings[2] which cannot be uttered."[3]. Likewise, the Psalms speak of singing "unto the Lord a new song,"[4] which could be understood to not only refer to a song which no-one else has heard before, but to singing an inspired song which comes directly from God (and in His words).

Although many Latter-day Saints have heard stories of missionaries being able to miraculously speak in foreign languages that were previously unknown to them, the practise of speaking in unknown or heavenly tongues, although spoken of in the scriptures, has not been a feature of Mormon worship since before the turn of the twentieth century, when it would often take place in testimony meetings which then occurred on the first Thursday of every month. That this spiritual gift was quite common is well documented, both in the contemporary journals of the Saints, and subsequently by scholars, so we we will not touch much upon that aspect of it here, but it is interesting to note that the first recorded instance of this gift being used by a Latter-day Saint was also in song:

> "The earliest account of tongues in Mormonism describes the ecstatic singing of Lyman Wight, a former Campbellite Disciple. Wight had taken charge of the new Kirtland Church of Christ while the first

1 1 Corinthians 14:15, see Col 3:16 & Eph 5:18-19

2 Greek = sighings

3 Romans 8:26 (Interestingly Joseph said this verse should be corrected to read "... with striving that cannot be expressed" see Teachings of ..., p. 278)

4 Ps 149:1, see 33:3

> missionaries to that area returned to New York. Burning with charisma, Wight held up his hands before an 1831 congregation, and as his palms appeared to glow, he sang "a song which no one ever heard before, and which they said was the most melodious that they ever listened to. It was sung in another tongue."[5]

Lyman went on to serve in several important positions in the Church, and was ordained an Apostle in 1841 (although he later fell away from the Gospel after the death of Joseph). He was not the only Apostle who had such an experience though. Lorenzo Snow, after addressing the Saints assembled at a conference in Manchester, England (where he was serving his mission) "concluded his address by singing beautifully in tongues."[6] Wilford Woodruff was another member of the Quorum of Twelve who also displayed this gift, as he recorded in his own journal, "I spent the evening with Priest Turpin at Bishop Whitney's. Had a vary happy time in speaking, singing, hearing, and interpreting tongues, and in prayer with the family."[7] Both these men, as is well known, went on to be Presidents of the Church.

We have been left in no mystery either as to what the Prophet Joseph Smith thought about this, as can be seen from the recollection of Helen Mar Whitney (who had been a plural wife of his), as recorded in Woodruff's diary many years later:

> "Before they left Sister Whitney sung in tongues in the pure language which Adam & Eve made use of in the garden of Eden. This gift was obtained while in Kirtland through the promise of Joseph. He told her if she would rise upon her feet (while in a meeting) she should have the pure Language. She done so and immediately commenced singing in that language. It was as near heavenly music as any thing I ever heard."[8]

Joseph did not just promise others this gift but was a participant in it himself, as an entry in his 'Kirtland Revelation book' shows - "Given by Joseph the seer, and written by F. G. Williams ... Sang by the gift of Tongues and Translated." This does not make it entirely clear whether Joseph did the singing or the translating, although in this author's view as the wording is reminiscent of Joseph's use of language, it was probably the latter. Either way it shows he also took part in this revelatory outpouring himself:

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5 Michael Hicks, Mormonism and Music: A History, p. 35
6 Times & Seasons 4:5, from Millennial Star June 1, 1842
7 Wilford Woodruff's Journal, Vol. 1, 1833–1840, p. 121
8 Wilford Woodruff Journal, 3 Feb 1854

> "Age after age has rolled away, according to the sad fate of man, countless millions for ever gone. At length the period of time has come that oft was seen by a prophetic eye and written too by all holy men Inspired of the Lord. A time which was seen by Enoch of God at a time when he stood upon the mount which was called the mountain of God. As he gazed upon nature and the corruption of men, of man and mourned their sad fate and wept and cried with a loud voice and heaved forth his sighs. ..."[9]

It seems that singing in tongues was not a confusing mess of noise or a droning monotone dirge, but was instead quite melodious. In fact the Saints turned some of the songs into hymns and poems (such as one called *Moroni's Lament* that speaks of his last days upon the earth). One L.D.S. Scholar in his own studies on the subject illustrates how musically complex singing in tongues could be:

> "What strikes the reader of early Mormon accounts of singing in tongues is the mellifluousness and grace with which the songs seem to have been executed. The setting to music of strange syllables became a small art form unto itself. ... A tongues duet in the Kirtland Temple was reportedly sung "simultaneously… beginning and ending each verse in perfect unison, without varying a word… as though we had sung it together a thousand times." Elizabeth Ann Whitney of Kirtland sang in tongues with a voice remembered as both "birdlike and full of symphony." And so far was the Mormon practice from the strenuous exercises of revivalism that at least one Mormon woman sang in tongues for two hours while sleeping."[10]

Although one might think that beautiful singing that attended this gift might be enough of a reason for its existence, singing in tongues served many other purposes. For those who received or interpreted it, it would have undoubtedly been a greatly spiritual experience, as well as those who felt the spirit that attended it. But the Lord at various times also used this gift to reveal His will, and to warn or inform His children. This can be seen in the following example:

> "One Sunday morning, while opening the meeting with prayer, the gift of tongues came upon me, but thinking of Paul's words, that it is sometimes wisdom not to

9 Kirtland Revelation book, 27 Feb 1833
10 Michael Hicks, Mormonism and Music: A History, p. 36

> speak in tongues unless one is present who can interpret, and forgetting that a sister possessing the gift of interpretation was present, I quenched the Spirit, and it left me.
>
> Immediately after, another brother spoke in tongues, the interpretation of which was, that "the Lord knew we were anxious to learn of the affairs of our brethren in Missouri, and that if we would humble ourselves before Him, and ask, He would reveal unto us the desires of our hearts."
>
> Missouri was some thousand miles from Portland. We accordingly bowed again in supplication before the Lord, and, after rising from our knees and re-seating ourselves, the same brother broke out singing in tongues in a low, mournful strain.
>
> But judge our feelings when the interpretation was given, and was found to be some thirteen or fourteen verses of poetry, descriptive of affairs in Missouri, and the murder of our brethren there, telling us that just at that time - "Our brethren lay bleeding on the ground. / With their wives and children weeping around."[11]

Just as being inspired to speaking in a foreign tongue has often attended missionary work from the days of Christ's apostles, we should not be surprised to find that singing in tongues has also been used in spreading the Gospel. This particular story involved Dan Jones, who was one of the Church's most successful missionaries in his home country of Wales, where he baptized thousands. One day a Hindu man from Bengal knocked on his door "seeking charity." Elder Jones helped the man, taught him the Gospel, and took him to Church that Sunday. Not only did the Saints, who perhaps only knew English and Welsh, teach the man in "eight different languages of the East," they also surprised him by singing in Malabar and Malay. This left such an impression upon the man that on the 21st of July, 1847 he became the first Indian convert to the Church.[12]

Another story shows us how the Lord can even use such a gift to protect the Saints:

> "It was during a period of much trouble with the Indians. In 1867 the fort had been built to accommodate ten or twelve families. It was built of stone, with big,

11 Benjamin Brown, George Q. Cannon, Gems for the Young Folks, p.67. Note: he later became a Patriarch.

12 See Millennial Star, 1 Aug. 1847

thick walls and heavy gates. My grandparents, with other families, lived in this fort for some time while the Indians were on the warpath.

One day the men left the women and children to go into the canyon for a load of wood. As the men didn't expect to be gone for very long, and the Indians had not been bothering the families for some time, the gate was left unbolted.

Soon after the men left, several warpainted and vicious-looking Indians stalked through the gate and into the fort. The poor, frightened women caught up their children and hurried to my grandmother's room. The Indians followed them to the door, banged loudly on it, and demanded food. The terror-stricken women did not dare refuse, and so allowed them to enter while they quickly set food on the table. Grandmother was able to conceal her fright more than the other women. As the warriors started gulping down their food, one of them, who appeared to be their leader or chief, motioned to her and grunted, “You sing now.”

Grandmother hesitated, not knowing what to do. She felt she could never control her voice for the fright she felt, hidden though it was. But at the second, more gruff, command, the sisters fearing for their own and their children's lives, pleaded with her, “oh, please, Sister King, sing for them.” As the Indians began again to grunt, “Hurry up, sing!” she started to sing the first song that came to her mind, hardly realizing that it was a Latter-day Saint hymn, “O Stop and Tell Me, Red Man.” After the first verse she paused, but the Indians, who had stopped eating to listen, demanded more. The women were looking at her in astonishment.

When she had sung the entire four verses of the hymn, the Indians, to the amazement and relief of the little group, got up from the table and filed silently our of the door and out of the fort. The women flew to my grandmother. “Why Sister King, we didn't know you knew the Indian language.” Grandmother stared at them. “Know the Indian language? I don't!” “But you sang that entire song in their language,” they said excitedly. “That's why they got up and left. They understood every word you sang to them!“

And so she had God's spirit directing her. The message of that hymn went straight to the Indians' hearts, and they left the frightened white people, went

> back to their camps, and pondered the words of the song.[13]

Despite the miraculous and faith-promoting nature of those accounts we have looked at so far - which are perhaps but a small selection of such phenomenon, most of which was probably not recorded – this gift seemed to have disappeared completely by around the turn of the century. However a woman was promised in her Patriarchal Blessing given in 1904 that "A time will come in thy life when thou wilt be required to sing in tongues; thou wilt be among a class of people, and the Lord will bless thee with their language."[14] We have no record of the fulfillment of that blessing however. The last time it was spoken about it in General Conference was in 1910 by Heber J. Grant, and no reference to it seems to have ever been made in the Ensign, or any current Church manuals.[15]

We might wonder what the reaction might be if someone were to sing in tongues at an LDS Church meeting in our day. The site might seem very strange to most members, as it is doubtful there is anyone still alive who remembered hearing it in meetings that took place in the 1800s. I began this article amazed to find any information on this subject, and was even more surprised to find an account of a woman who did indeed try to sing in tongues only a couple of decades ago, but I was probably not as surprised as the members of the ward who saw and heard it for themselves. In her own words:

> "In the summer of 1980, I met a newly converted Mormon woman who was a former charismatic protestant. As our friendship grew, she encouraged me to seek after the gift of "speaking in tongues." She gave me a self-help guide on the topic. On August 1, 1980, after putting the children to bed, I finished the reading of the book, and followed the instructions on how to open to "speaking in tongues." As I followed the directions, I began to sing rather than speak in another language. I would start going up and down scales, as my voice seemed prompted to do. I felt a heightened sense of alertness and

13 Story of Matilda King Robinson, from Remarkable Stories from the Lives of Latter-day Saint Women, Hartshorn, Leon R., compiler, Volume II, pp. 146, 147. Note – "Tell Me Red Man" appeared as no. 63 in the original LDS hymnbook.

14 Holograph in Emma Lucy Gates Papers, Harold B. Lee Library

15 However, there is some evidence of this gift continuing amongst Fundamentalist Mormons at least until the early 1940s: "Jan. 30. ... Olive has spent some time beyond the mortal veil, it seems, viewing some Nephite cities and scenes of 25 A.D. and heard their language by prophets and sang in tongues to those present. Her expressions are truly remarkable. Feb. 18. ... We took in our car also sisters Olive Kunz and Mother Allred to the sisters meeting. Here at the Boss home, Olive testified to the sisters of her experiences in vision of the Nephites. She sang in tongues; i.e. the Nephite language." (Journal of Joseph Lyman Jessop, 1941)

suddenly, I knew that I was singing songs from some ancient temples. ...

The following day was Sunday, and in this altered state, I decided that I should stand up in the church testimony meeting and "speak in tongues." The first Sundays were always a day of fasting and then giving testimonies in the church meetings if we felt so moved. ... My next memories were of being in the women's meeting, and during the testimony time, standing and singing in tongues. I then interpreted to these dumb-founded women what it was I was saying. My charismatic friend then also rose and explained to the very perplexed Mormon "sisters" what was happening. ... Someone ran for the Bishop of the Ward, and another hustled a nurse up to see me. Thereafter I was subjected to intense questioning from all of the male hierarchy, and released from all my church callings. My perplexed bishop announced to my husband that he could intensely feel the "Spirit", but did not know what to make of this occurrence. He later decided that I was experiencing "Megalomania" and urged my husband to seek psychiatric help for me."[16]

The author of that account is no longer a member of the Church, although they do not say if the reaction they received was the reason for this. Whether they were acting according with the Spirit we cannot tell, although the scriptures seem to recommend if not insist that a different person translate than the one who spoke in tongues.[17] Although, from her recollection her Bishop seemed to think – at least at first – that she was inspired. We can only imagine what might happen in our own local L.D.S. Chapels if this occurred, but may hope that if the Spirit was present that the members would recognize it, and accept such a spiritual gift as God might wish them to.

An aged member who lived through both the time in the Church when this was common and our more modern era when it has become almost unheard of lamented the loss of this gift during his lifetime, and we would do well to ponder upon his own reflection on this subject, which was printed in the official Church periodical of the time:

"I was somewhat startled a few days ago, while in conversation with a young brother who had just returned from a mission to Scandinavia, by hearing him remark that he had never in his life heard anyone speak in tongues.... He has filled an honorable mission, and is today strong in the faith, and yet, he has never heard and experienced one of the most common gifts of the

16 Judith M Mclean P.hd, Divine Light Newsletter, Divine Light Center, Jan 2002.
17 1 Corinthians 12:10, although 14:13 might give the opposite interpretation

gospel, as enjoyed years ago.

The remark was somewhat of a shock to me; because in the early days of the Church - where I was reared - there were so many of the Saints who enjoyed the gifts, and there were none among my acquaintances who had not heard the sweet sound of the gift of tongues. Many times there would be both speaking and singing in tongues, in the same sacrament meeting. The interpretation of tongues was equally as common as the tongues themselves. In fact, we were wont to regard the speaking in tongues, the interpretation of tongues, the relating of dreams and prophesying, as an essential part of the latter-day gospel.

If men now think they can get along without the gifts of the gospel, may not the time come when they may believe they can get along without its ordinances?*"[18]

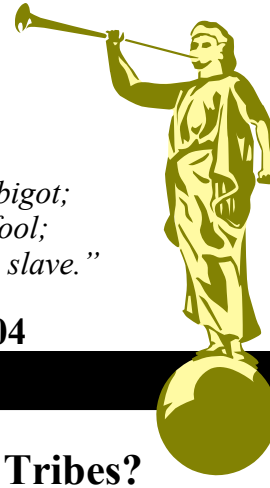
A sobering thought!

18 Dr. James Allen, Passing of the Gift of Tongues, Improvement Era 8, Dec 1904, p. 109&111. *See Mormon 9:19

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel

"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."



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Issue 3, Feb - Mar 2004

Where are the Ten Lost Tribes?

The whereabouts of the lost tribes of Israel has been a mystery regularly debated among Latter-day Saints since the beginning of the restoration of the gospel. Many theories have abounded to explain how they are hidden from our view, with some suggesting they may be living underground near the North Pole, or in some other remote region on the earth which remains yet undiscovered, or hidden from view to explorers.

The beginning of their story, however, is not so puzzling, and is well attested to by the records of ancient scriptural history. The tribes of Israel had fallen into wickedness, despite the warnings of their prophets, such as Lehi, that it would lead to them being captured and taken to Babylon[1]. Yet they failed to repent, and they were taken out of the land God had given them as was predicted. Even during their captivity God raised prophets among them like Daniel to try and bring them back to righteousness, but many of them either refused to reform or were slow to do so.

Many of them eventually recognized the awful state they were in and sought to leave the worldly influence of the land they lived in, and it is recorded in the ancient Apocrypha that, "they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a farther country, where never mankind dwelt, that they might there keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land."[2] This group came to be known as the lost ten tribes, because their location from then on was unknown to the world.

Most secular scholars and some of the more liberal Latter-day Saints have assumed that they became scattered among the nations of the earth. Certainly, some of them did become integrated into Babylonian society, or set off to live elsewhere. However, the Lord has revealed in many places throughout scriptures that many of them remained a distinct and separate people, who will yet return en mass in a miraculous manner.

We learn from the Book of Mormon that the Nephites were not the only "other sheep" who Jesus promised to visit, but that the Saviour also intended to appear to the Lost Tribes,[3] and that they had their own scriptures which would one day be revealed to us[4]. The three Nephite apostles, who were promised they would never die, were also told they had a mission to perform among these Ten Tribes[5], as does John the Revelator according to Latter-day revelation.[6] One of Joseph Smith's

1 2 Kgs 17:6-8
2 2 Esdras 13:41
3 3 Ne 17:4, 21:26, see 16:1-3
4 2 Ne 29:12-13
5 3 Ne 28:29
6 D&C 77:14

contemporaries recolected:

> The Spirit of the Lord fell upon Joseph in an unusual manner, and [he] prophesied that John the Revelator was then among the Ten Tribes of Israel who had been led away by Shalmaneser, King of Assyria to prepare them for their return from their long dispersion, to again possess the land of their fathers.[7]

It seems that Joseph gained firsthand knowledge of the mission of the beloved apostle John, from meeting with him personally:

> While 'the camp of Zion' was on the way to Missouri in 1834 Joseph was some ways ahead of the company one day, when there was seen walking with him by the roadside a man, a stranger. When the company came up there was no person with him. When at camp that night, Heber asked the Prophet who that man was; Joseph replied it was the beloved Disciple, John, who was then on his way to the Ten Tribes in the North.[8]

The Lord has prophesied that Joseph, or one of his successors will yet take part in the return of these tribes.[9] That return will take place in an astounding way, when: "they who are in the North countries shall come in remembrance before the Lord; and their prophets shall hear his voice, and shall no longer stay themselves; and they shall smite the rocks, and ice shall flow down at their presence. And a highway shall be cast up in the midst of the great deep. ... And the boundaries of the everlasting hills shall tremble at their presence."[10]

Where could this North country they reside in be? Where is it they will be returning from? Where are they now? Some Church members, such as Benjamin F. Johnson and Oliver B. Huntington, have suspected it could be referring to the North Pole[11]. But it is unlikely that there is any part of the earth left undiscovered, or that if there were that it would be big enough to hold all those people without them being noticed in any way, and the idea of their being a subterranean civilisation has been debunked to most peoples satisfaction.

One early Mormon Apostle, George Reynolds, spoke of these ancient Israelites turning "their journeying feet toward the polar star."[12]

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7 History of the Church, John Whitmer, see DHC 1:176.
"Joseph said that John [the Revelator] was to tarry until Christ came. He is now with the Ten Tribes preaching to them, and when we can get ready for them they will come." (Life of Levi Ward Hancock, June 4th, 1831)

8 Heber C. Kimball letter to Addison Everett, Oliver B. Huntington Journal, 13th January, 1881.

9 D&C 110:11

10 D&C 133:26-27,31

11 BFJ, My Life's Review, OBH Journal, January 13th, 1881

12 As quoted in James Talmage, Articles of Faith, p. 512

In doing so he was perhaps giving a hint of a once popular belief amongst Church members that the Ten Lost Tribes were not on the earth at all, but had departed from it, just as the City of Enoch had thousands of years before[13]. Parley P. Pratt seems to have been the first member to make public his thoughts that this might be the case[14]. But was this his own opinion, the result of inspiration, or something he had learnt from the Prophet? Certainly this idea was still around until the early part of the 20th century, as President B.H. Roberts of the Seventy mentions that, "There are those I believe, who ... have held that perhaps the Ten Lost Tribes were located upon some detached portion of the Earth."[15]

Of course opinions, even from Apostles, are not to be given the same weight as doctrine. Although one might suspect the thoughts of Church leaders might come as the result of greater knowledge of the gospel and a greater degree of experience and wisdom. So it may be unwise to discount them quickly without investigating their ideas more thoroughly. Especially when such opinions come from a Prophet of God, as Joseph himself had a similar opinion:

> The Prophet Joseph once in my hearing advanced his opinion that the Ten Tribes were separated from the Earth; or a portion of the Earth was by miracle broken off, and that in the latter-days it would be restored to Earth or be let down in the polar regions. Whether the Prophet founded his opinion upon revelation or whether it was a matter of mere speculation with him, I am unable to say.[16]

We also have Brigham Young's own recollection of this, that, "he had heard Joseph say that the Ten Tribes of Israel were on a portion of land separated from this Earth."[17] To Brother Brigham Joseph's teaching wasn't merely speculation, and President Young personally believed it to be true, and was, "quoted as saying that the Ten Tribes of Israel are on a portion of the Earth - a portion separated from the main land."[18]

Another one of Joseph's closest companions, also shared their belief in these tribes living on another planet. Eliza R. Snow, was both the wife of Joseph Smith and later Brigham Young. She described her own beliefs on this point in a more poetic form:

> And when the Lord saw fit to hide
> The ten lost tribes away;
> Thou, Earth, was severed to provide

13 Moses 7:69
14 Millennial Star 1:258
15 Defense of the Faith and the Saints 2:447-480
16 Orson Pratt to John C. Hall, December 13th, 1875.
17 Wilford Woodruff Journal, September 8th, 1867
18 Matthias F. Cowley, Wilford Woodruff - History of His Life and Labours, 1909

The orb on which they stay.[19]

Unlike President Young however, we know exactly what Joseph related to her on the subject, Charles L. Walker wrote of an interesting conversation he had with her during the twilight of her life:

> At night paid Sister Eliza R. Snow a short visit and had some conversation with her on the dividing of the Earth. She told me that she heard the Prophet say that when the Ten Tribes were taken away the Lord cut the Earth in two, Joseph striking his left hand in the centre with the edge of his right to illustrate the idea, and that they were on an orb or planet by themselves, and when they return with the portion of this Earth that was taken away with them, the coming together of these two bodies or orbs would cause a shock and make the 'Earth reel to and fro like a drunken man.' She also stated that he said the Earth was now ninety times [percent?] smaller now than when first created or organized.[20]

Eliza's hymn, which was part of the Church's hymnbook from 1856 to 1912, would undoubtedly have raised questions in the minds of some members, and on one such occasion, one member revealed more of Joseph's teachings on this subject in the following statement:

> "Brother Brown, will you give us some light and explanation of the 5th verse on page 386 of the Hymn Book which formed another planet, according to the Hymn of Eliza R. Snow?"
>
> Yes, sir, I think I can answer your question. Sister Eliza R. Snow, in visiting my grandparents, was asked by my grandmother: 'Eliza, where did you get your ideas about the Ten Lost Tribes being taken away as you explain it in your wonderful Hymn?' She answered as follows: 'Why, my husband (The Prophet Joseph) told me about it.'
>
> Have you any other information that your grandfather ever gave you, as contained in any conversation with the Prophet Joseph Smith?
>
> I have! One evening in Nauvoo, just after dark, somebody rapped at the door very vigourously. Grandfather said he was reading the Doctrine and Covenants. He rose hurriedly and answered the summons at the door, where he met the Prophet Joseph Smith. He said, 'Brother Brown, can you keep me over night, the mobs are after me?' Grandfather answered, 'Yes, sir.

19 From "Address to Earth", Millennial Star 13:272, September 1852.

20 Diary of Charles L. Walker, March 10th, 1881. (Lorin C. Woolley had a similar recollection of Sister Eliza's views, see Truth magazine 7:182; and another account in George E. Woolley Journal, September 22, 1891.)

> It will not be the first time, come in.' 'All right,' the Prophet said, shutting the door quickly. He came in and sat down. Grandmother said: 'Brother Joseph, have you had your supper?' 'No' he answered, 'I have not.' So she prepared him a meal and he ate it. Afterward they were in conversation relative to the principles of the Gospel. During the conversation the Ten Lost Tribes were mentioned. Grandfather said, 'Joseph, where are the Ten Tribes?' He said 'Come to the door and I will show you, come on Sister Brown, I want you both to see.' It being a starlit night the Prophet said 'Brother Brown, can you show me the Polar Star?' 'Yes, Sir,' he said, pointing to the North Star. 'There it is.' 'Yes, I know' said the Prophet, 'But which one? There are a lot of stars there.' Grandfather said: 'Can you see the points of the Dipper?' The Prophet answered, 'Yes.' 'Well' he said, 'trace the pointers,' pointing up to the largest star. 'That is the North Star.' The Prophet answered: 'You are correct. Now,' he said, pointing toward the star, 'do you discern a little twinkler to the right and below the Polar Star, which we would judge to be about the distance of twenty feet from here?' Grandfather answered, 'Yes, sir.' The Prophet said: 'Sister Brown, do you see that star also?' Her answer was, 'Yes, sir.' 'Very well then, he said, 'let's go in.'[21]

Could such a detailed description from the Prophet Joseph be just mere speculation on his part? Of course if this was the only such account we might question its accuracy, but we have at least seventeen similar accounts from friends of Joseph Smith,[22] many of which were recorded at earlier dates. This is but one other example:

> He then referred to the 'Ten Tribes' saying, "You know a long time ago in the days of Shalmanezar King of Assyria when the Ten Tribes was taken away, and never heard of since." He said, "The Earth will be restored as at the beginning, and the last taken away will be the first to return; for the last shall be first, and the first will be last in all things." He illustrated the return by saying: "Some of you brethren have been coming up the

21 [Signed] Israel Call, Given to High Councilor Theodore Tobiason, October 19th, 1924. At the end of this statement the following was added: "Brother [Israel] Call, you have here read the statement of Brother [Homer M.] Brown [Patriarch of Granite Stake, and grandson of Benjamin Brown] concerning the Ten Tribes of Israel being upon another planet besides this? 'Yes, and I have heard my father [Anson] relate the same regarding the Ten Tribes, and father heard the Prophet make the same statement that the Ten Tribes are on a another planet, as related by Brother Brown."

22 Daniel Allen, James Beck, George Q. Cannon, Philo Dibble, Jacob Gates, Jacob Hamblin, Franklin W. Richards, Samuel Rogers, Bathsheba Smith, Joseph Snow, and John Van Cott also left similar testimonies in addition to the ones quoted in this article.

> river on a steamboat, and while seated at the table, the steamboat runs against a snag which upset the table and scattered the dishes; so it will be when these portions of the earth return. It will make the earth reel to and fro like a drunken man," quoting 24th chapter [of] Isaiah, 20th verse. When speaking of the return of the Ten Tribes, he said, "The mountains of ice shall flow down at their presence," and a highway shall be cast up in the middle of the great deep."[23]

The similarity between these accounts (of which there are many more) and the faithfulness of the witnesses establish that Joseph Smith did indeed teach that the Ten Lost Tribes were upon a different planet. This explains how they have remained a separate people, unknown to the rest of the world, and the miraculous nature of their return.

Sadly there are some details that we have no record of the Prophet revealing, such as the manner in which they left the earth, or how the knowledge of their whereabouts was revealed to him. Did they become sufficiently righteous for their city or country to be translated? This may be unlikely, considering the state they were in when they left and the amount of time it took Enoch and his people to reach this point.

Did the Lord inspire them with the scientific invention and discovery needed to be able to effect their own escape into space? Or did He, seeing their earnest desire to be removed from the temptations of the world, use His power to give them a home where that wish could be truly granted? Whatever means were used it was no less an amazing miracle that will only be equaled by their return from the heavens.

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23 Wandle Mace Journal, 1809-1890, p. 38-39.

Has Joseph Smith Been Resurrected?

On Sunday, the 8th of February of this year a man named D. Michael Bingham stood outside a popular Fundamentalist meeting place handing out pamphlets, seeking to convince those leaving their afternoon Sacrament meeting that theirs was the wrong brand of Fundamentalism. This is a reply from one of those who took a copy of his pamphlet, and felt their faith was misrepresented:

Dear Mr. Bingham,

I'd like to begin by thanking you for the pamphlet you gave me recently (Fundamentalist Slavery). You undoubtedly wrote and delivered it at your personal time and expense because you honestly believe I and others are mistaken on several points of our beliefs, and you hope that given your reasoning, we might come to the same conclusion which you have. However, it may surprise you to learn that I have studied the issues you bring up in depth, and have come to an entirely different conclusion from you.

I appreciate that with the questions you ask and evidences you present that your views must seem pretty convincing to some, and it may be hard to comprehend how others could view the matter differently. But I would like to think that as I have studied these matters from a different perspective, I might have some insight into how you have misunderstood some of the 'evidence' and the conclusions you feel it leads to, and I'm sure as a seeker of truth you will anxious to consider a different view on your beliefs.

I would like to look specifically at your view that Joseph Smith was not resurrected by the time of his 1886 visitation to John Taylor, as related by Lorin Woolley. I have chosen this subject because it is perhaps the least ambiguous - either he was resurrected or not. It is my sincere belief and that of most Fundamentalists that he was, but as you point out, others (notably anti-Fundamentalists Anderson and Hales) argue that his body was dug up by the Reorganized church after 1886, and that this 'proves' the events of 1886 could not have happened.

I personally always look for the simplest answer, and in this case in this case it seems to me that the simplest answer is that the bodies dug up were not those of Joseph and Hyrum Smith!

It seems to me that the Reorganized church is not the most trustworthy of sources for verifying the identity of the bodies, as they had an agenda for claiming that the body was that of Joseph Smith, as Samuel Bennion, an LDS authority who was shown the skeletons at the time noted - “It is my impression brethren that he had heard reports that Brigham Young took the bodies of Joseph and Hyrum to Utah and that

he wanted to prove it untrue."[1]

The fact that there were reports of Brigham Young taking Joseph's body to Salt Lake raises that as a possibility, even though Brigham Young seemed to give the public impression that Joseph had been buried back East. Perhaps President Young just wanted the real graves left undisturbed.

It must be asked though, "how did Frederick Smith know where to find the bodies (presuming they were buried in the East)?" They were meant to have been in an unmarked grave (as the Saints were worried about the bodies being desecrated), and even Joseph's son David Hyrum did not know its whereabouts as he lamented in the old hymn, "the Unknown Grave", which was once part of both the LDS and RLDS hymnals.[2] Interestingly the Old Testament speaks of no man knowing the sepulcher of Moses, yet we know that he was translated and that his body didn't lie in the dust.[3]

Could the President of the RLDS Church have dug up some other men? Could the other legend be true that they buried a man who looked like Joseph in his place? Could the skeletons have been tampered with? The science of forensics was practically non-existent in the 1920s, and it was a period when skeletal fossil hoaxes were common. We have no DNA preserved of the Prophet with which to prove even to the convincing of Gentile scientists who was buried and who was dug up. So we cannot claim with absolute certainty that the body was that of Joseph and that he wasn't resurrected, no matter how strong the desire of some to disbelieve Woolley's account is.

Another question also raises itself with the timing of the 'discovery' of the bodies: Why would Lorin Woolley even attempt to claim Joseph was resurrected a year after his body had supposedly been unearthed? If he was fabricating his story, surely he would have avoided giving the impression Joseph was resurrected so that it wouldn't undermine his tale. It might be concluded that it was only if he had actually seen what he said he did would he feel duty bound and unafraid to declare what he really saw, despite what the Reorganized Church claimed.

All of this is only a list of possibilities, but it shows that there are alternative explanations, and that it was indeed possible for Joseph to have been resurrected. Besides this there are also other indications that he was indeed resurrected some time after his death and before the 1920s, that further substantiate Lorin Woolley's testimony.

As early as 1847, Brigham Young told the Saints whilst "clothed with the Spirit" that, "... we should yet have Brothers Joseph and Hyrum and many of the Saints in their resurrected bodies with us on earth."[4] In

1 Samuel O. Bennion to Heber J. Grant, January 21, 1928, Church Archives.
2 #8 in 1909 edition of the Deseret Sunday School Union hymnal.
3 Deuteronomy 34:5-6, Alma 45:18-19
4 30 July 1847, Wilford Woodruff Journal 3:244

the 1880s Erastus Snow prophesied that the day would come very soon after, "The time is drawing near (much nearer than scarcely any of us can now comprehend) when Joseph will be clothed upon with immortality ..."[5]

Heber C. Kimball even gave a description of the conditions in which Joseph Smith would return embodied to earth, "... the Saints will be put to tests that will try the integrity of the best of them. The pressure will become so great that the more righteous among them will cry unto the Lord day and night until deliverance comes. Then the Prophet and others will make their appearance, ..."[6] Surely the events of the 1880s with the Prophet John Taylor in hiding and thousands of men having been put in jail for their belief in Mormonism, there was no better time for this prediction to be fulfilled.

Indeed the Lord himself said in 1882 to his Prophet in a revelation that, "Joseph Smith ... was slain ... but he yet lives, and is with me where I am."[7] The Lord testified of a living Joseph Smith, just as his servants have sometimes proclaimed of a living Jesus Christ. How could Joseph Smith be where a resurrected and glorified Saviour and His heavenly Father lives without he himself having a resurrected body with which to endure their glory and that of their kingdom?

A devout Latter-day Saint (and non-Fundamentalist) had this truth revealed to him when visiting the spirit world in June 1898, who later related, "as to whether or not the Prophet Joseph Smith is now a resurrected being. While I did not ask the question, they read it in my mind and immediately said, 'You wish to know whether the Prophet has his body or not?' I replied, 'Yes, I would like to know.' I was told that the Prophet Joseph Smith has his body, as does also his brother Hyrum"[8]

Perhaps some will place greater faith in the findings of the Reorganized Church, the arguments of anti-Fundamentalists, or the reasoning of those who do not have the same testimony that Lorin Woolley and others have had. But as for this author and many thousands of others we have had a witness of the events of September 1886 that kept alive the authority to live all of God's laws, and have little doubt that Joseph the Prophet is preparing to return again to the earth to fulfill his mission, for we remain in a day of spiritual and physical bondage, in which God's Church is wandering in the wilderness, and all things must be set in order before the coming of the Savior.

With sincerity,

A brother in the Gospel

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5 1884, Journal of Discourses 25:32-34.
6 Deseret News, May 23, 1931; Modern Times, Cleon Skousen, p. 31-2.
7 Unpublished Revelations 81:19.
8 Peter E. Johnson, "Mission Unfinished", Relief Society Magazine, Aug. 1920.

As an article in a previous issue of this magazine has already discussed the question of Priesthood conferral which Mr. Bingham also brings up, as other historical aspects of the 1886 meeting have been well treated by other scholars and it is the anti-Fundamentalists who have been found wanting, and as his criticisms of specific Fundamentalist groups seem very over-generalized and are given without documentation, we will add nothing more to the response here, hoping it has led Mr. Bingham and our readers to a better understanding of Fundamentalist views on this issue.

Note: two other views on this subject have also been related to me by others, although these theories are perhaps unusual and held by only a small minority, I have included them here for the readers interest and to allow them to judge for themselves:

Let us suppose for a moment that Joseph Smith's actual body was unearthed in the 1920s, this could mean that either Lorin Woolley was mistaken and that Joseph Smith appeared as a Spirit, or that some of our views may be mistaken about what the resurrection involves.

Although most 'traditional' Fundamentalists do not seem to believe that Woolley just saw the spirit of Joseph Smith in 1886, a few have put forth the theory that this was not just possible, but was what actually occurred. The one line in Lorin's whole account that would tend to discourage such a view is where he related that he and Charles Wilkins shook hands with the Prophet Joseph. Some might argue that even this though does not necessarily mean he was physically embodied - as we know that the premortal Jesus touched the stones the Brother of Jared gave him,[9] and we have accounts of evil spirits exerting physical force.[10] Nevertheless, there are admittedly challenges with this particular interpretation.

Another view argues that as far as our knowledge of the resurrection is concerned, it is very limited, and some have supposed that the only reason the body of Jesus was divinely removed was because otherwise others would claim He was an impostor upon His return. The Gospels do give the impression though it was the same body that He took up again.[11]

There is another opinion of the resurrection though, and it is that our bodies will be resurrected at the same age (33) at which Jesus died.[12] If true, then it could mean that our resurrected bodies may be substantially different than our mortal bodies – as the cells (if not the atoms) that make up our flesh and bones would have replaced themselves completely over time – and so the resurrected body may still be essentially our body, but a younger version, whilst the atoms of the older body are still left to deteriorate in the grave. Proponents of this argument claim it is hard to discount the possibility entirely as some bodies are born without limbs or disfigured, and so we may not be able to assume that our resurrected bodies are made entirely from our earthly ones.

It is interesting to consider such alternative views, however speculative, although they raise as many questions as they try to answer. Most of those with a testimony of Lorin Woolley's account are happy to leave such details to God to explain in His own time, rather than try to come to a certainty with our limited perspective and knowledge on this subject.

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9 Ether 3:6

10 See Heber C, Kimball, Journal of Discourses 3:229–230.

11 The nature of the mortal and resurrected body do differ though, as 1 Corinthians 15:44 points out.

12 Philippians 3:21 may hint at this.

Fundamentalism and the Church

A Letter from Owen A. Allred
Presiding Elder of the Apostolic United Brethren

Since I am a fundamentalist and am one of the sons of a fundamentalist leader, I think I have the right to comment on what is going on in Utah among some of the fundamentalist people.

I often wonder what became of that wonderful promise that our Lord gave us when we came down to this mortal earth. The promise was that we would have the privilege of having our "free agency," our free choice.[1] The promise was that we would be judged by our own works, the fruits that we ourselves produce, and not for someone else's transgressions[2] or for their successes. The key was and is free agency. Freedom of religion.

Here we are today in this wonderful world of ours where we are trying to live the fullness of the gospel of Jesus Christ, restored by the prophet Joseph Smith, trying to be an example before the world of righteous families and righteous living. Yet we turn around and rob one another of free agency. How in the world can any of us progress if we are in the exact shoes that we put the blacks in 200 years ago? In other words, "You have the freedom to eat and to live, provided you just do what I tell you to do and live the way I tell you to live." Have we no more right to think for ourselves or make our own decisions and do many other things of our own free will and choice? Some even instruct us not to study the scriptures, not to study anything we are told not to. There seems to be the fear that if we choose to think for ourselves, we are just apt to apostatize. But then sometimes apostatizing from apostasy may not be such a bad idea.

I am so amazed at how in the world we can claim to have righteous leaders - good, honest men - when they tell us that our freedom is to obey their instructions. And if we choose not to obey, we can get out. And in addition, they are quick to tell us they are taking away our dear wives and children. How in the world can anyone take my wife away from me without also taking away my free agency - as well as robbing my wife and children of theirs? And how can those children be taken away from either or both of us without taking away the free agency of those wonderful children? Does this present act recently taking place of dividing husbands, wives and children result in wonderful families? Is it a blessing to the children to not know where they are going, to whom they will belong, having no choice at all in the matter? As a matter of fact, the person or persons to whom those

1 Abraham 3:25, 2 Nephi 2:27
2 Article of Faith 2

removed wives and children are given also have no choice in the matter. They are just expected or forced to accept the responsibility. Is this inspired leadership? Where is this kind of dictatorship sustained in any of the scriptures?

These things are very, very heart breaking to me and make mockery of true principles. This is happening among some fundamentalists in the State of Utah. We as a people who are trying to live the fullness of the gospel and produce righteous, happy families who will honor, obey and sustain the laws God has revealed, are horrified at such actions.

We used to believe in the scriptures, but it appears that some no longer need the scriptures anymore because we now have "living prophets." What kind of living prophets? What is a prophet? A true prophet is a man who lives and teaches the same principles taught by his predecessor.[3] And what is a false prophet? He is one who immediately sets out on his own to correct the 'mistakes' of his predecessor[4] just as soon as he finds himself in a position of control. Is this the picture of today among many fundamentalists as well as in the Mormon Church? Certainly many fundamentalists have gone right down that path, and it's the picture of Mormonism today. During the past 150 years, the Mormons have been doing the best they can to apologize for the teachings of the prophet Joseph Smith and subsequent early leaders of the Church. The idea seems to be to correct them now, because they were so wrong in many areas of principle and ordinance. Our free agency has been minimized or entirely removed, until the people are no longer encouraged to think for themselves. We have adopted the old attitude that "the thinking has been done."[5]

So we have leaders today in fundamentalism and in the Mormon Church who spend much time correcting the "mistakes" made by their founding prophets. Ordinances and principles of the gospel once considered essential have been altered, changed and / or dropped, along with free agency. Sadly, as our children grow to maturity, they have no idea what was originally restored to the Church through the prophet Joseph. And it grieves me. This has been the situation for many years now. One would think that if the prophet Joseph were to return to the earth today, he would neither recognize nor accept the many changes in modern Mormonism.

Where are we headed, then? It makes me feel so sad when I see fundamentalist leaders picking and choosing doctrine and restructuring the gospel of our Lord. Oppose the altering of the gospel and we will be kicked out. We will lose our families. What kind of slavery is it when a

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3 "the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." (1 Corinthians 14:32)

4 "if any man preach any other gospel than that which I have preached he shall be cursed." (Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 368, Galatians 1:8)

5 Ward Teachers Message, Deseret News, Church Section p. 5, May 26, 1945; Improvement Era, June 1945

person no longer has the right to his own children, his own wives who also lose their right to choose their own husbands? If the fundamentalist leaders believe they can take away the free agency of their members, then I am ashamed to be a fundamentalist. However, I am very definitely opposed to those recent actions in Colorado City and elsewhere. Force and dictatorship are not qualities of a true prophet or of any true representative of God.

The prophet Joseph Smith taught that the gospel of Jesus Christ was restored to this earth for the last time and that it would never be taken from the earth again until the Lord comes. This has been taught by all of the early leaders of the Mormon Church. But now it is taught by modern leaders that plural marriage, lived by the Old Testament prophets, is the most degrading of principles and is supposed to be done away with forever. It is now considered an evil. But lived as it is supposed to be practiced, there is no evil in it. Some of the greatest men on this earth have come through plural marriage lineages.

I have to wonder how many people have thought about the Savior. His life exemplified having love and concern and consideration for women. It has never been found that he was not a married man himself The prophets Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and 5 or 6 others in early Mormonism taught that he was, as also did a few historians who had no connection to Mormonism. One of the common qualifications for being called "Rabbi," as Jesus was, was to be a married man. (“Rabbi” means “Master,” or, “Teacher,”[6] or, in the culture of the Jews, implying “Master of the Torah.” Jesus was called “Rabbi,” also, “Rabboni,”[7] Lord and Master). What did Jesus say? “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life”[8] and did he not say, “Come, follow me”?[9] But as I have said, today that which was good is now evil, and that which is evil is now not only good, it is highly esteemed.

So I am worried about these things, and I want to make clear my objections and let the world know our stand on this point. The current newspapers have mentioned that there are now around 30,000 fundamentalists in the State of Utah. And their number is increasing all the time. 1 believe that a good portion of those people honestly believe that plural marriage is a vital part of their religion, that it is a vital part of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and that God expects us to live that holy law. I know that some of the finest people in Utah and elsewhere have come out of plural, happy families, who have lived and are living this principle correctly and reverently.

I also know that sooner or later we are going to have to pay for our insults against the Lord and the Prophet Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, John Taylor, and those wonderful men and women who

6 John 1:38; John 3:2
7 John 20:16
8 John 14:6
9 Luke 18:22; see also Matthew 16:24; Mark 1:17; Luke 9:23.

established and built up true Mormonism.

But now we have leaders among the Latter-day Saints who no longer believe in those restored, higher principles of the gospel. But they do believe in what can be called the "United States Christianity." And that is so far from the truth that, as I have said before, it is an embarrassment and a sorrow.

[Signed] Owen A. Allred, *9 February 2004*

This is but one of several letters written recently, including one published in the Salt Lake Tribune on the first of February.

Public Schools vs. the Prophets
– What the Prophets Have to Say about Home & Religious Education

The intent of this article is not for the readers to judge the choices of others regarding their children's education. We cannot fully know the circumstances and challenges other parents face, but we can study the teachings in this article and pray for ourselves to find how relevant and important they are to us personally, and how we might best implement them.

Home schooling children is not a modern idea. Throughout the world's history it was the norm, and produced famous names like Newton, Edison, Einstein, Graham-Bell, the Wright Brothers, DaVinci, Washington, Franklin, Jefferson, Lincoln, Churchill, Dickens, C.S. Lewis, Joseph Smith and Brigham Young. Before the advent of state schooling (and often after) the greatest inventors, scientists, artists, novelists, political and religious leaders received their education from their parents, from their own enthusiasm to learn, and from the religion with which they were associated.

The American experiment in public (state-provided) education began as early as the 1830s, and was started by those men who admired the Prussian system of schooling, which seemed to them to provide that country with obedient soldiers and little dissension amongst the working classes. Those businessmen and social reformers who sponsored these early schooling systems made it clear that their aims were to either create compliant workers or to spread the new and seemingly less troublesome atheistic religion of humanism.[1] It didn't take them long to convince the states that it would also be in their interests to have an influence in the upbringing of children, and the compulsory education system was born (which never had anything to do with providing greater knowledge or opportunities). From these beginnings there is now a massive schooling system, with tens of millions of students, taking billions of dollars in taxes, and staffed by teachers, psychologists, security guards, and non-teaching staff of every description.[2]

1 This mission has not ceased as can be seen from the comments of a more recent prominent teacher and humanist: "These teachers must embody the same selfless dedication as the most rabid fundamentalist preachers, for they will be ministers of another sort, utilizing a classroom instead of a pulpit to convey Humanist values in whatever subject they teach, regardless of the educational level - preschool day care or large state university. The classroom must and will become an area of conflict between the old and the new-the rotting corpse of Christianity together with its adjacent evils and misery, and the new faith of Humanism...." *(John J. Dunphy, The Humanist, Jan-Feb 1983)*

2 For a more detailed account of this history see "The Underground History of American Education", by John Taylor Gattto (former New York State teacher of the year).

Despite this uninspired history some might assume – especially due to the unusually high percentage of Mormon parents who send their children to public school that there has always been some policy of supporting and working within such institutions, but even if that were true now it has not always been the case.

Wilford Woodruff who recorded more of the Church's history than any other individual wrote in his journal that "Joseph Smith spoke very strongly against the Saints sending their children to Gentiles schools. The Lord would hold the Parents responsible for it."[3]

In Joseph's words there is little room left for recommending state schools, which are by their nature truly Gentile schools. Not only this but the Prophet told the Saints they would be accountable for the consequences that came with putting their children in public education.

This passage was written many years after Joseph made the statement though, and is not quoted in any Church manuals or magazines, so some members might question the accuracy of the statement. Indeed it wouldn't be wise to base our conclusions on such important matters on a single recollected quote. Fortunately Joseph Smith's successors were not silent on this subject either. Brigham Young gave the Saints his own counsel on this subject:

> "It is the will of the Lord our God that we teach our children the way of righteousness from the Holy Scriptures and there is no better method than for mothers to teach them at home, and in the Sunday Schools."[4]

If we are to accept Brigham Young as a true prophet and consider that he was speaking as inspired to do so then this means that the Lord Himself expects mothers to be responsible for the education of their children. This may seem like an overwhelming responsibility for many women, especially if they try to replicate all of the facilities and programs modern schools offer (which assumes there would be any benefit in doing this). But Brother Brigham felt that his sisters in the gospel were deserving of the confidence he placed in them to teach their own:

> "I want to enlist the sympathies of the ladies among the Latter-day Saints, to see what we can do for ourselves with regard to schooling our children. Do not say you cannot school them, for you can."[5]

> "The duty of the mother is to watch over her children, and give

3 Wilford Woodruff Journal 8:23.
4 23 May 1852, Manuscript Addresses 2:113.
5 Journal of Discourses 16:19-20.

> them their early education, ... It is the experience of people generally, that what they imbibe from their mothers ... is the most lasting upon the mind through life... Children have all confidence in their mothers; and if mothers would take proper pains, they can instill into the hearts of their children what they please."[6]

After the remarks above President Young referred to the two thousand young men described in the Book of Mormon, who owed their faith and success to the teachings of their mothers.[7] Nevertheless many parents believe that they can accomplish the same degree of education (or at least one that is good enough) through trying to be involved with the school their offspring attend, that by choosing the school carefully, monitoring its programs, and participating in its activities where possible, that public school can still be beneficial to their children, and offer more than they can. This raises the question, "can public schools ever be good enough?" to which one of the early prophets of this dispensation answered:

> "I would rather have my child taught the simple rudiments of a common education by men of God, and have them under their influence, than have them taught in the most abstruse sciences by men who have not the fear of God in their hearts."
>
> "That education which but amounts to a little outward appearance and applies only to a few conveniences of this life is very far short of that education and intelligence which immortal beings ought to be in possession of." *(John Taylor)*[8]

Scriptural prophets left similar warnings -

> "... nevertheless, they are led, that in many instances they do err because they are taught by the precepts of men." *(Nephi)*[9]
>
> "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." *(Paul)*[10]

Schools which are not organized on a religious basis, which are in the control of the state, where the teachers are not good Latter-day Saints, and cannot teach Gospel principles, can never compare to the

6 Journal of Discourses 1:66-70.
7 Alma 56:47-48.
8 The Gospel Kingdom, p. 273 & Journal of Discourses 5:263.
9 2 Nephi 28:14.
10 Colosians 2:8.

education a parent can give its child or a group of parents can ensure by setting up their own school built upon their faith, and operated by the Spirit. This was plainly taught by the Prophets John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff:

> "Shall we employ teachers that will turn the infant minds of our children away from the principles of the gospel and perhaps lead them to darkness and death? ... I would like to know if a Methodist would send his children to a Roman Catholic School, or vice versa? I think not. Do either send their children to 'Mormon' schools, or employ 'Mormon' teachers? I think not. Do we object to it? No, we do not; we accord to all classes their rights, and we claim rights equal with them. Well, shall we, after going to the ends of the earth to gather people to Zion, in order that they may learn more perfectly of His ways and walk in His paths, shall we then allow our children to be at the mercy of those who would lead them down to death again? God forbid! Let our teachers be men of God, men of honor and integrity, and let us afford our children such learning as will place our community in the front ranks in educational as well as religious matters. But would we interfere with other religious denominations? No. Prevent them from sending their children where and to whom they please? No. Or from shipping where they please? No. I would not put a hair in their way, nor interfere with them in any possible way; they can take their course, and we want the same privilege." *(John Taylor)*[11]

> "We feel that the time has arrived when the proper education of our children should be taken in hand by us as a people. Religious training is practically excluded from the District Schools. The perusal of books that we value as divine records is forbidden. Our children, if left to the training they receive in these schools, will grow up entirely ignorant of these principles of salvation for which the Latter-day Saints have made so many sacrifices. To permit this condition of things to exist among us would be criminal. The desire is universally expressed by all thinking people in the Church that we should have schools where the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants can be used as text books, and where the principles of our religion may form a part of the teaching of the schools." *(Wilford Woodruff)*[12]

As far as this author is aware (after considerable study on the

11 Journal of Discourses 19:249.

12 Revealed Educational Principles and the Public Schools, p.238.

subject), no prophet has ever encouraged the children of Latter-day Saints to be educated in public (state) schools in preference to religious schools or by home schooling.

We cannot expect those not of our faith, or who work for the government, to be expected to give them a Gospel perspective on the subjects they are told to teach. Nor can we fully shelter our children from the world's philosophies if we entrust our children's education to such places.[13] Gentile teachers can never be qualified enough to teach our children, no-matter how well studied in their subjects. From ancient to more modern times God's servants have taught this same principle:

> "And also trust no one to be your teacher nor your minister, except he be a man of God, walking in his ways and keeping his commandments." *(Mosiah)*[14]

> "Get the very best teachers we can to teach our children; see that they are men and women who fear God and keep his commandments. We do not want men or women to teach the children of Latter-day Saints who are not Latter-day Saints themselves. Hear it you Elders of Israel, and you school-trustees! We want none of these things. Let others who fear not God take their course; but it is for us to train our children up in the fear of God. God will hold us responsible for this trust. Hear it, you Elders of Israel and you fathers and you mothers!"

> "We do not want outside folks to teach our children, do we? I think no. We do not want them to teach us how to get to heaven, do we? If we did, it would be of no use, for they do not know the way. Well, then, we do not want them to tamper with the minds of our little ones." *(John Taylor)*[15]

This is why the scriptures state we should "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."[16] But we relegate this responsibility to others, and then are still surprised when it results in our children going astray so often.[17]

Some might argue, "how can our children compete in the world with getting degrees and diplomas?" But it is easy to forget that God does not judge us by these pieces of paper, which have no value to Him.

13 As a recent educational leader put it, "Education is the modern world's temporal religion ..." *(Bob Chase, president, National Education Association, NEA Today, April 1997.)*

14 Mosiah 23:14.

15 Journal of Discourses 20:179 & Journal of Discourses 21:100.

16 Proverbs 22:6

17 Of course there are other influences seeking to lead our children astray - our children's peers, the media, the music industry, and youth magazines. Although schools can be seen as an advertising platform for all of these.

He does not want us to become part of the world, or to compete with one-another when we should be co-operating. The scriptures and prophets of God have often been dismissive of the value of worldly education:

> "O that cunning plan of the evil one! O the vainness, and the frailties, and the foolishness of men! When they are learned they think they are wise, and they hearken not unto the counsel of God, for they set it aside, supposing they know of themselves, wherefore, their wisdom is foolishness and it profiteth them not. And they shall perish." *(Nephi)*[18]

In fact the prophets have taught us that – if we had the choice to do so – we should refrain from supporting state schools with any of our money. The Constitution in support of this gives no authority to government to institute educational systems, their philosophies, and oblige children to conform to them. The schools preach a religion we should not be asked to support financially.

> "I am opposed to free education as much as I am opposed to taking property from one man and giving it to another who knows not how to take care of it ... Would I encourage free schools by taxation? No!"
>
> "To call a person a poor miserable apostate may seem like a harsh word; but what shall we call a man who talks about free schools and who would have all the people taxed to support them." *(Brigham Young)*[19]
>
> " ... all these burdens are placed upon the tax payers of the state to teach the learning or education of this world. God is not in it. Religion is excluded from it. The Bible is excluded from it. And those who desire to have their children receive the advantages of a moral and religious education are excluded from all these state organizations, and if we will have our children properly taught in principles of righteousness, morality and religion, we have to establish Church schools or institutions of our own, and thus the burdens of taxation are increased upon the people. We have to do it in order that our children may have the advantages of moral training in their youth." *(Joseph F. Smith)*[20]

So how did compulsory education get such a foothold in a

18 2 Nephi 9:28, See v. 29.
19 Journal of Discourses 18:357 & Journal of Discourses 16:19-20.
20 Conference Report, Oct 1915, p.4.

Mormon state like Utah? History tells us it was forced upon the Saints by the Edmunds Tucker act of 1887, and with men such as Judge Beatty who proposed it as a way of undermining the influence of Mormonism:

> "The Mormon Church is a hostile power in our very midst. But the most serious question is how to combat it. ... There is but one most peaceable and efficient solution of this entire problem. It is by means of education. ... Compulsory attendance would assure the presence of the Mormon children. Enlightenment would soon remove that plague spot, polygamy, from our moral life, and would reduce to a minimum the influence of the Mormon priesthood."[21]

Thus we see one example of the real intent behind the governments interest in our childrens education.[22] It came not from the intent of providing the children of the Saints with useful skills for learning, but was intended as a course of indoctrination and brain-washing. The First Presidency did not stay silent about this assault on its youth:

> "Our children should be indoctrinated in the principles of the Gospel from their earliest childhood. They should be made familiar with the contents of the Bible, the Book of Mormon and the Book of Doctrine and Covenants. These should be their chief text books, and everything should be done to establish and promote in their hearts genuine faith in God, in His Gospel and its ordinances, and in His works. But under our common school system this is not possible."[23]

What would be the result of disregarding this counsel for our children?

> "We go and deliberately turn our children over to whom? To men who do not believe in the gospel, to men according to your faith, are never going to the Celestial Kingdom of God. They will get as big a glory as they are prepared for, but they are not going there. And you will turn your children over to them. And you call yourselves Latter-day Saints, do you? I will suppose a

21 Judge William A. Beatty., September 1884, Overland Monthly and Out West.

22 From my research I have concluded that the true purpose of public (state) schooling is threefold - 1) to remove the responsibility of bringing up children away from their parents and hand it over to the government, 2) to replace the influence of community and spiritual beliefs and values with the religion of secular humanism (psychological and scientific atheism), 3) to prepare the children to become serfs to the state and the businesses that support it.

23 Messages of the First Presidency, Jun. 8, 1888, Vol.3, Pg.166-169.

> case. You expect to be saved in the Celestial Kingdom of God. Well, supposing your expectations are realized, which I sometimes doubt, and you look down, down somewhere in a terrestrial or telestial kingdom, as the case may be, and you see there your children, the offspring that God had given you to train up in his fear, to honor him and keep his commandments, and perceive that between you and them there is a great gulf, ... And supposing they could converse with you - which however they could not - but if such were the case, what would their feelings be toward you? It would be Father, Mother, you are to blame for this. I would have been with you if you had not tampered with the principles of life and salvation in permitting me to be decoyed away by false teachers who taught incorrect principles. And this is the result of it. " *(John Taylor)*[24]

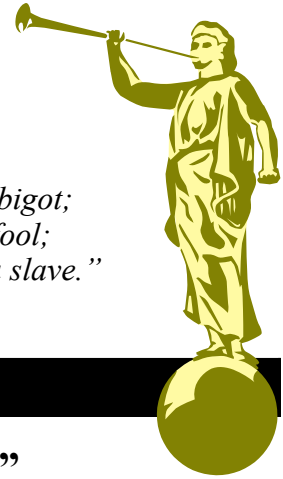
In contrast the blessings that come from ensuring our children have a Godly education give us youth that more often stay in the faith, are more likely to maintain a good relationship with their parents, and better help build up God's kingdom more effectively.

> "Let our teachers be men of God, imbued with the Spirit of God that they may lead them forth in the paths of life, and warn them against the various evils and iniquities that prevail in the world, that they may bear off this kingdom when we get through, and be valiant in the truths of God. Teach them how to approach God, that they may call upon him and he will hear them, and by their means we will build up and establish Zion, and roll forth that kingdom which God has designed shall rule and reign over the nations of the earth. We want to prepare them for these things; and to study from the best books as well as by faith, and become acquainted with the laws of nations, and of kingdoms and governments, and with everything calculated to exalt, ennoble, and dignify the human family. We should build good commodious school-houses, and furnish them well; and then secure the services of the best teachers you can, and thus 'train up your children in the way they should go.' Solomon said, if you do, 'when they are old they will not depart from it." *(John Taylor)*[25]

24 Journal of Discourses 20:107.
25 Journal of Discourses 20:60.

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel



"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."

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Issue 4, Apr – Sep 2004

Raising Up Seed

A look at the Plural Marriage in the Book of Mormon

It has been frequently assumed - not only by detractors of Mormonism, but by many Church members themselves - that the Book of Mormon condemns polygamy and has no righteous examples of men practicing that way of life. Those outside the faith have tried to use this argument to undermine Church leaders teachings on this principle during the 19th century, and it has led some Latter-day Saints to conclude that polygamy was just an undesirable necessity tolerated only in harsh times or extreme conditions. However, the Book of Mormon itself, when read closely, seems to tell a different story.

Lehi

The first great Patriarch of the Book of Mormon was Lehi. Sadly a great deal of the information surrounding him that was lost to us with the loss of the first 116 manuscript pages by Martin Harris' wife, but Nephi's smaller record does give us some interesting insights into his father's life that may relate to this subject.

In Nephi's record we learn that after the death of Ishmael in the wilderness *(1 Ne. 16:34)* Lehi begins referring to Ishmael's sons as "my sons." *(2 Ne. 1:28)* His remarks may have indeed just come from a fatherly concern, but it does raise another possibility – could Lehi have married Ishmael's widow, and thus literally become a father to her sons?

This might remain mere speculation if it were not for some other facts outlined in the scriptures: Whilst Sariah is spoken of as being old and near death *(1 Ne. 18:18)*, Lehi has two sons – Jacob and Joseph *(18:7)*. It would appear that Sariah was past childbearing age and there is no mention of any special blessing of the Lord (like Sarah, Hannah or Elizabeth of old[1]) enabling her to still have children. Who then could have been the mother of Jacob and Joseph if not Ishmael's widow, and who was the mother of Nephi's sisters, born even later? *(2 Ne. 5:6)*

To further substantiate this point the Book of Mormon tells us that Nephi refers to Sariah as "our mother" when speaking of him and his older brothers, yet speaks of "their mother" when referring to the mother of his younger brothers *(1 Ne.??? 18:19)*.

The Brother of Jared

Perhaps the greatest other Patriarch of which we have record is the brother of Jared, Mahonri Moriancumur, who the Lord directed to the new world long before Lehi. It is interesting that when the book of Ether speaks of Jared it mentions "his family" but when it speaks of his

1 Sarah: Gen 18:1-15;21:2, Hannah: 1 Sam 1:2-20, Elizabeth: Luke 1:5-25,57

brother it refers plurally to his "families." *(Ether 1:41)* Is this just a mistake in the text or did the brother of Jared have more than one family? This idea is not a new one as we read in an earlier LDS edition of the Book of Mormon (commenting on this passage) that; "From this verse it is seen that the Brother of Jared had a plurality of families." *(This footnote was removed in 1921)* Later the scriptures tell us that "the number of the sons and daughters of the brother of Jared were twenty and two souls," whilst Jared has 12 children. *(6:20)* How could Mahonri Moriancumur have so many children if he did not have more than one wife and more than one family?

Amulek

The only other righteous man we have mention of in the Nephite record that may have lived this principle is Amulek who recounts how the Lord "hath blessed mine house, he hath blessed me, and my women, and my children." *(Alma 10:11)* Given the strictness with which contact between men and women were regulated in ancient times, who could the women be that Amulek is speaking of if not his wives? Would he refer to any other women as "my women" even if they were relatives or servants?

Of course lack of reference to any other righteous men living this principle does not necessarily mean that others did not live it also, and it is understandable how the references we have looked at so far have been easily overlooked. Sadly our scriptural accounts give little reference to wives at all, whether singular or plural in number.

Jacob & Polygamy

The most controversial comments on this subject comes from the prophet Jacob in the book that carries his name, who, noticing the whoredoms many of his contemporaries entered into by using polygamy as justification gives them a solemn warning of the dangers of such excesses.

Some have taken his words as blanket condemnation of polygamy in all circumstances, but Jacob makes it clear that the intent of those he condemned was to " seek to excuse themselves in committing whoredoms" and so the " things which were written concerning David, and Solomon his son" were used as an excuse by them. *(Jacob 2:23, see 1:15)*

Our critics will doubtless point out that Jacob speaks of many of David and Solomon's "wives and concubines" being an "abomination" before the Lord. *(v. 24)* But they forget that the Bible makes it clear that many of David's wives were initially given to him by God himself, and that it was the fact that some of Solomon's large number of wives came

from outside God's covenant people, and that they turned him towards the worship of false gods, that led him to fall from God's grace.[2] These facts are confirmed by ancient and modern revelation -

> And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;
>
> And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; ... *(2 Sam 12:7-8, see 1 Kgs 15:5)*

> David also received many wives and concubines, and also Solomon and Moses my servants, as also many others of my servants, from the beginning of creation until this time; and in nothing did they sin save in those things which they received not of me. *(D&C 132:38)*

It was because of the whoredoms that had already been carried out and "the sorrow ... mourning ... [and] cries of the fair daughters " who in many instances had been "lead away captive" *(v. 31-33, see v. 35)* and whose chastity had already been compromised *(see v. 28)* that inspired Jacob to tell those wicked men that "there shall not any man among you have save it be one wife; and concubines he shall have none;" *(v. 27)* Such men had proved themselves unworthy for the greater responsibilities of additional wives because of the abominations they had already committed, and would have only brought greater condemnation to themselves and additional suffering to their existing families if took other women as wives.

Jacob's comments were aimed directly at men who had fallen into unrighteousness and were seeking to justify it by the bad examples of David and Solomon after they had disobeyed the Lord.

Plural Marriage is no more inherently immoral than monogamy, but when a man seeks to take and abuse multiple wives he multiplies the sorrow and wickedness he can accomplish. Also when those wives are taken without the proper authority and permission of a prophet of God[3] then a man enters that covenant without the Lord's approval and without his divine help which is needed to live this principle properly.

Such were the sins of King Noah *(Mosiah 11:1)* and Riplakish *(Ether 10:5)* who both unrighteous lived plural marriage. Their lives mocked a true and sacred principle, and their lives both met untimely ends.[4]

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2 1 Kings 11:1-11

3 D&C 132:7,19

4 King Noah: Mosiah 19:20, Riplakish: Ether 10:8

Raising Up Seed

The one verse largely overlooked and forgotten - or more probably ignored - by those who would criticize the Latter-day Saints for their practice of polygamy comes from the same chapter in Jacob, in which the Lord Himself states:

> For if I will, saith the Lord of Hosts, raise up seed unto me, I will command my people; otherwise they shall hearken unto these things. *(2:30)*

Some have interpreted this to mean that monogamy, is usually preferred by God unless He specifically commands His people otherwise. This ignores the evidence of history which shows that the tradition of having only one wife came from the pagan Romans who wished to reduce women to property, as they had a scarcity of females amongst them.[5]

Let us look more carefully at the passage. The Lord states that if he will raise up seed unto Himself that He will command his people. Command them to do what? It can't be speaking about monogamy, because He had already commanded the wicked of Jacob's day to live that way. He makes this clear in the next sentence when He says that "otherwise they shall hearken unto these things." Jacob has already explained what "these things" are, he has spent the preceding verses making that very clear to the unrighteous. So it is the unrighteous who must hearken to a lesser law of monogamy, they are those who do not "raise up seed" unto the Lord.

To paraphrase the verse in simpler English terms - "The Lord says - If I will raise up seed unto me then I will command my people *[to live polygamously]*; otherwise they shall follow what they have already been told *[by Jacob, to live monogamously]*."

President Joseph F. Smith sustained this view with his remarks during the Reed Smoot court case in which he stated (when speaking of Jacob 2): "It is simply a commandment of the Lord unto him, and received by him and accepted by him, to enter into plural marriage by his law and by his commandment and not by their own violation."[6]

Some have supposed from this that 'raising up seed' is about having more children, to make the Church grow at a greater rate (although they now argue that this is no longer necessary). This is an argument many have used to explain the reason for Plural Marriage

5 Brigham Young, 6 July 1862, JD 9:322

6 Interestingly a contemporary of Joseph Smith said that the angel who commanded the Prophet to live plural marriage told him, "thus saith the Lord, the time has now come that I will raise up seed unto me as I spoke by my servant Jacob as is recorded in the Book of Mormon. Therefore I command my people." (Joseph Lee Robinson Journal, p. 14)

during pioneer times, but there is a serious problems with this line of logic: Statistically speaking Mormon women who lived polygamously had less children on average than their monogamous counterparts.[7] Therefore the Church would have grown faster by them not being plural wives!

The best tool for interpreting the scriptures are the scriptures themselves, and in the case this is proved true once again. Let us look once more at our polygamous patriarch Lehi. When he realized that his sons would be without wives and children upon the American continent the Lord instructed him that "it was not meet for him, Lehi that he should take his family into the wilderness alone; but that his sons should take daughters to wife, that they might raise up seed unto the Lord in the land of promise." *(1 Ne 7:1)* Thus his sons were able to "raise up seed unto the Lord", and not just his sons either as we have pointed out earlier in this article, but Lehi also was able to take an additional wife (Ishmael's widow) and have children through her (one of those children being Jacob himself).

Likewise Jared was told about himself and his brother that, "there *[in the promised land]* will I bless thee *[Jared]* and thy seed, and raise up unto me of thy seed, and of the seed of thy brother *[Mahonri]*, and they who shall go with thee, a great nation. And there shall be none greater than the nation which I will raise up unto me of thy seed, upon all the face of the earth." *(Ether 1:43)*

It was not the numbers of children raised up that were important, but hat they were raised up "unto the Lord." That they were the choice spirits God had in store for those who live his holy law of Celestial Plural Marriage.[8]

Never has there been as great a need as now that such a law be lived. We indeed live in the time prophesied by Isaiah and repeated by Nephi in which "seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." *(2 Ne 14:1, quoting Isaiah 4:1)*

Has there ever been a greater need for such a principle that our day?

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7 John A. Widtsoe, Evidences and Reconciliations

8 Daniel H. Wells, JD 4:254; George Q. Cannon, JD 13:201; Erastus Snow, JD 24:165-66

One-Hundred Years Hence

Parley P. Pratt

God, through his servants the prophets, has given unto all men a clue to the futures. In view of this we were cogitating upon our bed the other night what would be the state of the whole world a hundred years hence. In quiet succession the events and periods, which have filled up nearly six thousand years, passed before our mind's eyes, together with the accompanying, "Thus saith the Lord." "I will destroy the earth with a flood after one hundred and twenty years. There shall be seven years of famine in Egypt. Israel shall be held captive in Babylon till the land enjoys her Sabbaths 70 years." Then came Daniel's members and the exact time when the Saviour was born, His crucifixion resurrection and second coming. Thus while looking over the "Has Beens," we fell into a deep sleep, and the angel of our presence came to the bedside and gently said, "Arise." Now it mattereth not whether we were in the body or out of it - asleep or awake - on earth or in heaven, the sum of the matter is like this: Our guide (for such we shall designate the angel or being who conducted us) soon brought us in sight of a beautiful city, and as we were nearing the place, a pillar of fire seemingly over the most beautiful building, lit the city and country for a great distance around, and when we came by the "Temple of the Lord in Zion" in letters of pure language, and sparkling like diamonds, disclosed where we were. Our guide went round the city in order to give us a chance to count the towers; and as it was nearly sunrise, he conducted us into one, that we might have a fair chance to view the Glory of Zion by day light. We seemed to be swallowed in sublimity. The pillar of fire, as the sun arose magnificently or majestically, mellowing into a white cloud for a shade for the city from heat. The dwelling so brilliant by night, had the appearance of precious stones.

This is the fulfillment of the Word of Isaiah, "For brass I will bring gold, for iron I will bring silver, and for wood, brass, and for stones, iron; I will also make thine officers peace and thine executors righteousness."

Now the eyes of our understandings began to be quickened and we learned that we were one hundred years hence, (or ahead of common life) and we glorified. The veil that hides our view from the glory of the upper deep had been taken away and all things appeared to us as to the Lord. The great earthquake, mentioned by John and all the Prophets before him, had leveled the mountains over the whole earth.

The sea had rolled back as it was in the beginning, the crooked was made straight. and the rough places made plain. The earth yielded her increase and the knowledge of God exalted man to the society of resurrected beings. The melody and prayers of the morning in Zion

showed that the Lord was there, and truly so; for after breakfast, the chariot of Jesus Christ was made ready for a pleasure ride, and the chariots of His Hundred and Forty-four Thousands glittered in the retinue of earth's greatest and best; so glorious that the show exhibited the splendor of Gods, whose Father's name they bore on the front of their crown.

Our curiosity excited us to inquire what day they celebrated, to which our guide replied, "This is the feast day of the Lord to Joseph and Hyrum Smith, for being martyred for the truth, held yearly on the seventh day of the fourth month throughout all the tribes of Israel."

Flesh and blood cannot comprehend the greatness of the scene. The worthy of the earth with Adam at their head. The martyrs of different dispensations with Abel at their head and honorable men from other worlds, composed our assemblage of dignity majesty and divinity, so much above the little pageantry of man in his self-made greatness, that we almost forgot that mortals ever enjoyed anything more than misery, in all the pomp and circumstance of man's power over man. This was a feast day for Christ - this was the triumph of Kings and Priests unto God, and was a holiday of eternity. Who could be happier than he who was among this holy throng? No one! And away we rode out of Zion among her Stakes.

At the first city out we found the same spirit - all were one. While there, the following news by post came from the east. It was read from one of the papers just published that morning. In digging for the foundation for our new Temple in the one hundred and twenty-fourth city of Joseph, near where it is supposed the City of New York once stood, a large square stone was taken from the ruins of some building, which by a seam in it, indicated more than mere stone; the seam being opened disclosed a lead box about six inches square. This box was soon found to contain several daily papers of its time, together with some coins of the old government of the United States. It will be recollected that all the inhabitants of this city which were spared from calamity, were slung out when the earth was turned upside down some forty or fifty years ago for their wickedness.

The account of fire in one of the papers was truly lamentable, destroying as the paper stated, more than twenty-five millions worth of property in about three months. Each paper contained a large number of murders, suicides, riots, robberies, and hints of wars expected, with columns of divisions among the Sectarian churches about slavery, and the right way. The archer of paradise remarked, as these horrors of old times were being read, that all that was enacted of Babylon, before Satan was bound. Joseph Smith said, "Lord, we will put these papers and coin in the repository of relics and curiosities of Satan's kingdom of the old world," which was agreed to by all after exhibiting the coin. The silver coin contained the words, "United States of America," and "Half Dollar"

round the image of an eagle on one side, and a woman sitting upon the word, “Liberty” and holding up a night cap between 13 stars over “1845” on the other side.

The only ideas that could be gathered from all this was that the government had fallen from the splendor of an eagle to the pleasure of a woman, and was holding up the night cap as a token that the only liberty enjoyed then was star light liberty, because their deeds were evil. Another coin had the appearance of gold with “Five Dollars” upon it, but upon close examination it was found to be nothing but fine brass. While this was going on the Lord said, “Beware of the levee of old,” let us enjoy our day.

In a moment this band of brethren were off, and what could equal the view? No veil - no voice - the heavens were in their glory and the angels were ascending and descending: This earth was in its beauty. The wolves and sheep the calves and lions, the behemoths and the buffalo, the child and the serpent enjoyed life without fear and all men were one.

As we were passing to another city amid all this perfection of the reign of Jesus Christ before his ancients gloriously, we discovered the fragments of a hewn stone of a beautiful blue color with an abbreviated word, “Mo” and the figures “1838” upon it, to which the Lion of the Lord, (Brigham Young) exclaimed, “The wicked are turned into hell and forgotten, but the righteous reign with God in glory,” and it seemed as if the echo came from a redeemed world, “Glory.”

After about five hours ride among the cities and stakes of Zion, we returned to the Capitol to partake of the Feast of the martyrs, where Jesus Christ sat at the head of the Fathers and Mothers, sons and daughters of Israel. It was a sight which the world, even Babylon in its best days never saw or witnessed. Says Jesus Christ, as every eye turned upon him,

“Our Father and thine
Bless me and mine - Amen.”

After the feast, the sentiments, words of wisdom and other touching matters were to be published in Zo-mar-rah, or (Pure News). We stepped into the news room, and the first article in the “Pure News” which attracted our attention was the Minutes of the General Conference held in Zion on the 14th day of the First Month A. D. 1945, when it was motioned by Joseph Smith and seconded by John the Revelator that forty-eight new cities be laid out and built this year, in accordance with prophets who have said, “Who can number Israel? Who can count Jacob, let him fill the earth with cities,” - carried unanimously. Twelve of these cities to be laid out beyond eighteen degrees north (1 degree - 60 miles) for the tribes of Reuben, Judah, and Levi; twelve on the west

at the same distance for the tribes of Joseph, Benjamin and Dan; on the North twelve at the same distance for the tribes of Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun; and twelve in the west for the tribes of Gad, Asher and Naphtali.

The paper contained a notice for the half yearly conference as follows: "The General Half Yearly Conference will be held at Jerusalem on the 14th day of the seventh month, alternate with the yearly conference at Zion. It is proposed that the Highway cast up between the two cities of our God be decorated with fruit trees and shade trees between the cities and villages which are only eighty furlongs (or 10 miles) apart, for the accommodation of way-faring men of Israel. Gabriel (or Noah) has brought from Paradise some seeds of fruit and grain which were originally in the Garden of Eden, and will greatly add to the comfort and convenience of men."

While we were engaged in reading, a strain of pure music from the sweet singers of Israel came so melodiously over our sensations for the moment that we hardly knew whether angels or saints of the Millennium were chanting a vesper to their Lord. Our souls were so delighted with the performance as we saw the musical chairs pass filled with young men and maidens all in white robes that we only remember the following verses:

"Death and Satan being banished;
And the veil for ever vanished;
All the earth again replenished,
And in beauty appears.
So we'll sing Hallelujah,
While we worship our Saviour,
And fill the earth with cities
Through the Great Thousand Years."

Our eye next caught a map showing the earth as it was and is. We were delighted with the earth as it is. Four rivers situated a little south of Zion, for Zion is situated on the sides of the north. The first river is called Passon and runs west, and the second is called Gian, and runs south, the third is called Hundakal and runs north and the fourth is called the Faulers, and runs east. These rivers divide the earth into four quarters as it was in the days of Adam. And, with their tributaries, give an uninterrupted water communication over the face of the world. For in the beginning the earth was not called finished till it was very good for everything.

By the paper we were reading we learned that rain was expected in the beginning of the seventh month according to the laws of the Lord, for the promise is, "It shall rain moderately in the first and seventh months, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper." Contemplating the

greatness of the earth in its glory, with Jesus Christ for her King, President and Law Giver, with such wise counselors as Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Peter and Joseph, we were imperceptibly led to exclaim, "Great is the wisdom, great is the Glory, and great is the power of man with his Maker." When in a sudden our guide came in and said, "You must drink wine with the Lord in His kingdom and then return." This we did, and many things we saw are not lawful to utter, and can only be known as we learn from them, by the assistance of a guardian an angel.

When we were ready to return our guide observed "Perhaps you would like to look through the Urim and Thummim of God upon the abominations of the world in the day of its sin." "Yes," was our reply, and he handed us the holy instrument. One look and the soul sickened. Eye hath not seen - ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man what folly, corruption, and abominations are wrought among men, to gratify the lusts of the flesh; the lust of the eye, and the cunning of the devil, but they shall come.

We returned, and awoke, perfectly enamored with the glory of Zion to be, as well as the splendor and harmony of "The Feast of the Martyrs." Determining in our minds at some future day to give a sketch of the temple, wherein Jesus Christ sat and reigned with the righteous.

There was not a Canaanite in the land, nor anything to hurt or destroy in all the Holy Mountain, when the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, in short the heavenly reality of One Hundred Years Hence.

(From The Nauvoo Neighbor, 1845)

Generals in the War in Heaven

> "You the youth of the Church today, were Generals in the war in Heaven; and someday when you are back in the spirit world, you will be enthralled by the other souls who will be from so many other interesting periods of time, and who lived during the time of many great prophets. You may ask one person, 'when did you live?' and hear something like, 'I was with Moses when he parted the Red Sea, or I fought with Captain Moroni.' As you stand there amazed at the people you are with someone will ask you, 'which Prophet's time did you live during?' And when you tell them that you lived during the time of President Hinckley, a hush will fall over every hall and corridor of heaven and all in attendance will bow in your presence."

This statement - which has been spread by email, word of mouth, quoted in countless talks by Church members, and which some Saints have even pasted in their scriptures or hung on their walls – has been attributed to Boyd K. Paker, Thomas S. Monson and other members of the Quorum of the Twelve and past Church Presidents.

In response to the popularity of this story, the Church Education System sent a memorandum in November 1999 informing its area directors in North America that the quote was "spurious." President of the Twelve, Boyd K. Paker, himself disavowed authorship of the quote a couple of years later in a letter to Mission Presidents, adding that he did "not believe that statement." *(Church News, 28 April 2001)*

The Church and its leaders, in taking these actions, perhaps hoped to lay to rest what had seemed to have become a widespread faith-promoting rumor or folk doctrine as some call it. They did not address, however, where the statement originally came from and if anything was wrong with what it described and taught.

It has since come to light that the earliest publication of a quote similar to this one was in a book by Brad Wilcox called "Tips for Tackling Teenage Troubles" *(Deseret Book, 1998, p.26).* But Wilcox himself was only quoting a University of Utah Institute teacher, Jack Marshall. However Marshall's version did not say anything about "General in the war in heaven" or others 'bowing' to the youth of today. It is from Hyrum W. Smith, youth speaker and former Mission President, that we discover the origin of the 'Generals' quote:

> "On one occasion in Salt Lake City, many years ago, a man, not a General Authority, was speaking at a fireside to young adults. David O. McKay, the President of the Church, was sitting in the audience. ... The speaker was carried away by the Spirit and

proceeded to say the following:

'I am inspired to tell you tonight, young people, that in the pre-existence you served as captains and generals in the war in heaven.'

... At the end of the meeting he approached President McKay and said, 'Look, I got a little carried away up here tonight; ... Did I make a mistake tonight?'

President McKay looked at him and said, 'Actually you did. There were not any captains here tonight, only generals.'" *(Where Eagles Rest, 1992,, p. 28-29)*

Hyrum W. Smith doesn't make it clear whether he present at this meeting, or even if he knew the man personally who this is supposed to have happened to, yet if true then this seems to not only be the origin of this controversial phrase, but also an endorsement of it from a Church President. Which raises the question of: If President McKay agreed with such sentiments, why does President Packer disagree with them?

Perhaps Brother Packer just took exception to the thought of the ancient prophets of scripture bowing to the youth of today, as it is hard to imagine that anyone would believe this, given that the scriptures tell us that it is to Jesus Christ that "every knee shall bow." *(Romans 14:11)*

Whether we were Generals or whether we held any rank at all in the war in heaven seems immaterial to me, as the fact that we came to earth shows that we chose the right side in that conflict. Perhaps we didn't fight as valiantly there and we are trying to make up for it now, or maybe we were great warriors before we came to earth, but find ourselves struggling with our motivation and faithfulness here. Whatever our status in that pre-mortal existence, the scriptures have made it clear that now is the time for us to be tested and prove ourselves. *(See Ephesians 6:11-17 for instructions on how we as godly soldier's can do this.)*

Divorce & Re-Marriage

A popular view in Fundamentalist Christian circles is that a divorced woman (or man) should remain celibate and alone for the rest of her life. They derive this view from the words of Jesus to his disciples in Luke:

> Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery. *(Luke 16:18, also Mark 10:11-12 & Rom 7:3)*

This is not the only account, however, of what Jesus said on this issue, the account Matthew gives us adds one important proviso :

> But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to comit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced commiteth adultery. *(Matt 5:32, also 19:9)*

Paul also makes it clear that following the death of a spouse a woman is also free again to marry:

> For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband is dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. *(Rom 7:2, see v. 3)*

Some of the strict Protestant churches make an exception where the husband has committed adultery or after a husbands death, but others still do not. Yet there are other passages of scripture relevant to this issue that some of those who would consider a divorced woman forever un-marriageable have seem to have forgotten.

The importance of human companionship between men and women was emphasized by God in the beginning when he stated:

> And the Lord God said, It is not good that man [or woman] should be alone; I will make an help meet for him. *(Gen 2:18)*

For this reason the Lord instituted marriage, to be a safeguard and comfort to men and women:

> Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man has his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. *(1 Cor 7:2)*

Paul in a prophetic moment foresaw that some would seek to restrict marriage in the last days when he warned that:

> Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith ... forbidding to marry ... *(1 Tim 4:3)*

So we see some of the danger of trying to restrict others freedom to remarry. The apostle also added another situation in which a woman was not obliged to stay with her husband:

> But if the unbelieving depart let him depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases: ... *(1 Cor 7:15)*

In addition to this reason it might be argued that although some men may not physically commit adultery the affections of some husbands become so weakened or diverted that they abandon their wives emotionally or commit adultery in their hearts (which Jesus points out can be just as serious in his sermon on the mount). The relationship becomes dead no-matter how much the wife might try to nurture it, and she is effectively left a widow.

Ultimately, where eternal sealings are involved, the head of the Priesthood is the final human arbitrator in such matters:

> And if she hath not committed adultery, but is innocent and hath not broken her vow, and she knoweth it, and I reveal it unto you, my servant Joseph, then shall you have power, by the power of my Holy Priesthood, to take her and give her unto him that hath not committed adultery but hath been faithful; for he shall be made ruler over many. *(D&C 132:44)*

Only he presides over the keys to loose in earth and heaven, and only through that authority can any of our relationship be of an eternal nature.

The Church Walking With The World

The Church and the World walked far apart
On the changing shores of time,
The World was singing a giddy song,
And the Church a hymn sublime.
"Come give me your hand," said the merry World,
"And walk with me this way!"
But the good Church hid her snowy hands
And solemnly answered "Nay,
I will not give you my hand at all,
And I will not walk with you;
Your way is the way that leads to death;
Your words are all untrue."

"Nay, walk with me but a little space,"
Said the World with a kindly air;
"The road I walk is a pleasant road,
And the sun shines always there;
Your path is thorny and rough and rude,
But mine is broad and plain;
My way is paved with flowers and dews,
And yours with tears and pain;
The sky to me is always blue,
No want, no toil I know;
The sky above you is always dark,
Your lot is a lot of woe;
There's room enough for you and me
To travel side by side."

Half shyly the Church approached the World
And gave him her hand of snow;
And the old World grasped it and walked along,
Saying, in accents low,
"Your dress is too simple to please my taste;
I will give you pearls to wear,
Rich velvets and silks for your graceful form,
And diamonds to deck your hair."
The Church looked down at her plain white robes,
And then at the dazzling World,
And blushed as she saw his handsome lip
With a smile contemptuous curled.
"I will change my dress for a costlier one,"
Said the Church, with a smile of grace;
Then her pure white garments drifted away,

And the World gave, in their place,
Beautiful satins and shining silks,
Roses and gems and costly pearls;
While over her forehead her bright hair fell
Crisped in a thousand curls.

"Your house is too plain," said the proud old World,
"I'll build you one like mine;
With walls of marble and towers of gold,
And furniture ever so fine."
So he built her a costly and beautiful house;
Most splendid it was to behold;
Her sons and her daughters dwelt there
Gleaming in purple and gold;
Rich fairs and shows in the halls were held,
And the World and his children were there.
Laughter and music and feasts were heard
In the place that was meant for prayer.
There were cushioned seats for the rich and gay,
To sit in their pomp and pride;
But the poor who were clad in shabby array,
Sat meekly down outside.
"You give too much to the poor," said the World.
"Far more than you ought to do;
If they are in need of shelter and food,
Why need it trouble you?
Go, take your money and buy rich robes,
Buy horses and carriages fine;
Buy pearls and jewels and dainty food,
Buy the rarest and costliest wine;

My children they dote on these things,
And if you their love would win
You must do as they do, and walk in the ways
That they are walking in."
So the poor were turned from her door in scorn,
And she heard not an orphan's cry;
But she drew her beautiful robes aside,
As the widows went weeping by.

Then the sons of the World and Sons of the Church
Walked closely hand and heart,
And only the Master, who knoweth all,
Could tell the two apart.
Then the Church sat down at her ease, and said,

“I am rich and my goods increase;
I have need of nothing, or aught to do,
But to laugh, and dance, and feast.”
The shy World heard, and he laughed in his sleeve,
And mockingly said, aside -
“The Church is fallen, the beautiful Church;
And her shame is her boast and her pride.”

The angel drew near to the mercy seat,
And whispered in sighs her name;
Then the loud anthems of rapture were hushed,
And heads were covered with shame;
And a voice was heard at last by the Church
From Him who sat on the throne,
“I know thy works, and how thou hast said,
‘I am rich, and hast not known
That thou art naked, poor and blind,
And wretched before my face;’
Therefore from my presence cast I thee out,
And blot thy name from its place.”

Matilda C. Edwards

The Gathering of Israel

As Taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith & the Scriptures

Our tenth Article of faith tells us that "We believe in the literal gathering of Israel," but what does that mean? Is it just speaking of "the return of the ten tribes" or does it apply to us too? Early LDS history shows us that many newly converted Saints came from foreign lands across the ocean to this country to help build up Zion, yet that time – as far as most Church members are concerned - seems to have passed, so what relevance or importance can that doctrine have to us today?

To answer this question we will go back to the teachings of Joseph Smith, whom many of those early Mormons traveled thousands of miles to come and see and learn the restored Gospel from. The Prophet Joseph was not ambiguous about how important he viewed the doctrine to be, and told the Church members of his day that "One of the most important points in the ... fullness of the everlasting Gospel, is the gathering of Israel..." *TPJS 92)* Not only did he believe it was important to the Saints of his age, but in all eras of the earth's history:

> All the prophets have written, from the days of righteous Abel, down to the last man who has left any testimony on record for our consideration, in speaking of the salvation of Israel in the last days, goes directly to show that it consists in the work of the gathering. *(TPJS 83, see 308)*

Enoch, Noah, Moses, and Lehi are all examples of prophets who led God's people to the promised lands of their day. But Joseph did not begin the commencement of the gathering in our dispensation until he had received the keys to do so from Moses himself in the Kirtland Temple in 1836. *(D&C 110:11)*

This event was followed by extensive missionary work to British isles and elsewhere by the Apostles and others which brought in tens of thousands of converts. Converting these individuals was not the same thing as gathering them however: There were missionaries preaching and men converted before the keys of gathering were restored, and those in foreign lands were strongly encouraged to leave their active and stable Mormon branches to join the more persecuted Saints in America.

Almost 100,000 men and women would eventually cross oceans and plains to find the religious refuge they sought, and they considered their journeys to be part and parcel of their faith. In fact an early hymn some of them may have sung stated, "A Church without a gathering is not the Church for me; The Saviour would not own it, wherever it might be;" *(T&S 6:799)* Even the modern LDS hymn book is full of hymns on this subject.

Some have speculated that the the foreign converts who joined the Church needed the strength of the Church in America to maintain their faith, and that this is the reason they were told to move there. Yet this does not reflect the realty of the situation in England, where, during one period, they had three times as many members as the U.S.A. did. Certainly though for many the desire to share fellowship and to support one-another was a motivating factor, and Joseph commented how the gathering could allow the Mormons to "be together and bear each other's afflictions in the day of calamity." *(TPJS 101)*

To the early Saints gathering to America was not merely an option or suggestion, but a commandment. This was taught explicitly on several occasions by the Prophet Joseph, leaving no doubt to his teachings on the matter:

> ... if we are not sanctified and gathered to the places God has appointed ... we must fall; we cannot stand; we cannot be saved; *(TPJS 71, see p. 83 & 183)*

What made coming to America so urgent though? America as a nation was not without its social problems, nor exempt from the ravages of nature. To the early Saints it was not enough to be in the promised land, they sought to be amongst the Saints and apart from the rest of society. This was the reason for Nauvoo, and later the territory of Deseret: The Saints wanted to be part of a sanctuary of spiritual and physical safety, apart from the influences of the world, and not involved in its petty conflicts. Otherwise they would be liable to be caught up in the moral and real destructions that God had in store for the wicked countries and cities they lived in, as Joseph Smith again made plain:

> ... this gathering together of all the Saints, must take place before the Lord comes to "take vengeance upon the ungodly," *(TPJS 183, see 71 & 330-31)*

Some might ask though why the U.S. was chosen, rather than some other country. America is where the pilgrim Fathers came to find religious freedom, it is where the Lord raised up men to create a country that guaranteed the rights of its citizens. The Book of Mormon tells us it was the promised land of the Jaredites, and of the people of Lehi and Mulek, and that the Lord intended it from the start to be a land of liberty to those who keep God's commandments:

> Wherefore, this land is consecrated unto him whom he shall bring. And if it so be that they shall serve him according to the commandments which he hath given, it shall be a land of liberty unto them; wherefore, they shall never be brought down into

captivity; *(1 Nephi 2:7)*

People didn't gather to become part of American culture. They weren't looking to be cowboys, Republicans or to carry guns. They didn't really care if they were following the American way or even being un-American. It was belonging to and building up God's kingdom they sought, and to secure the promise of Paul that they would be "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the Saints, and of the household of God." *(Eph 2:19)*

The desire to gather burnt in their heart, it was always in their prayers, and as long as they remained in foreign lands they felt exiled from their true home. Wanted to claim what the righteous have always been promised by the lord – a place to build up God's kingdom. This particular land was promised to the descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh (which tribes most LDS belong to) by the father of the faithful Abraham thousands of years ago:

> Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall: ... unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills ... *(Gen 49:22,26)*

In summary the land of America has fulfilled and will yet fulfill a crucial role in God's plans and for his people:

- It was the site of the garden of Eden
- It is the land promised as an inheritance to the descendants of Joseph of Egypt (the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh).
- It was the promised land of the Jaredites, Nephites and Mulekites.
- It is the place where the Lord restored his gospel
- It is where the great Salt Lake temple envisaged by the Prophet Isaiah was built
- It is here the keys of the Priesthood and God's prophet is
- It (or at least parts of it) will be refuge from physical destructions
- It will be the location of the New Jerusalem, the return of the Ten Tribes, and Enoch's city

Some say that the need to gather is passed or its meaning has changed. If this were so it would raise the following questions:

- Have spiritual dangers ceased?
- Is the influence of Babylon diminished?
- Is the world now a safer place and will always be so?
- Has the Lord chosen a new promised land?

- Have the keys of gathering been taken from the earth?
- Has the commandment and law been revoked?

The answer to all these questions is of course "No!" The reasons and need for gathering are just as great if not greater than they have ever been. The truth of this doctrine has not changed, and the "gathering of Israel" the Articles of Faith says we believe in is not a figurative, symbolic or allegorical gathering, but still means a literal and physical bringing together of the Saints, as it has done throughout all the scriptures and all the ages of the world. There are destructions still coming and if we live in a latter-day Sodom or Gomorrah, we will not be safe until we leave it, and gather to Zion:

> And that the gathering together upon the land of Zion, and upon her stakes, may be for a defense, and for a refuge from the storm, and from wrath when it shall be poured out without mixture upon the whole earth. *(D&C 115:6)*

Others say that the Lord no longer has one promised land, but that the gathering place for the Saints is in their own home lands. One wonders whether some Israelite slaves made similar arguments to Moses, and would have tried to convince their comrades in bondage that if they waited long enough Egypt might turn into their Zion. The Lord has promised though that:

> And, behold, there is none other place appointed than that which I have appointed, neither shall there be any other place appointed than that which I have appointed, for the work of the gathering of my Saints. *(D&C 101:20)*

Those who have testimony of this doctrine still have obligation to keep this law, yet some would discourage such gathering as no longer practical, or bring up legal objections, as if the arduous journeys the early Saints undertook were easy, or as if God's laws are superseded by those of man, or that he cannot help faithful Saints circumvent or overcome such obstacles. The scriptures have a stark warning for those who would discourage their fellow Saints from gathering:

> Woe be unto the pastors that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture! Saith the Lord.
>
> Therefore thus saith the Lord God of Israel against the pastors that feed my people; Ye have scattered my flock, and driven them away, and have not visited them; behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, saith the Lord. (*Jer 23:1-2)*

Yet what happens to those who do not heed the warning to flee to Zion? Those who have had a chance or the opportunity to have create one, but have put it off as inconvenient or not yet necessary? Here again the Prophet warns us of the consequences of waiting too long:

> God has told us to flee, not dallying, or we shall be scattered ... I prophesy, that that man who tarries after he has an opportunity of going will be afflicted by the devil. *(TPJS 160)*

If we do not take the chance when we have it, we cannot be surprised when we find that our children go astray because of the continued influence of the world, nor can we blame God when the world spirals to its demise if we are caught in the crossfire. Our exaltation is at stake over this issue!

What about those of us already here, what is our obligation? Can we sit back in ease and comfort and forget our brethren and sisters who – without our help – may be effectively trapped in their lands of birth? The Lord tells us it is also our mission to "bring to pass the gathering of mine elect;" *(D&C 29:7)* and we would be ungrateful and unworthy servants if we left other Saints stranded outside Zion. Those who do help such Saints will truly become saviors unto them.

Even if we live in the mountainous mid-West, we still may have the need to more fully gather together as Saints and separate ourselves more completely from the world. This brings up sobering questions, that we each must answer for ourselves:

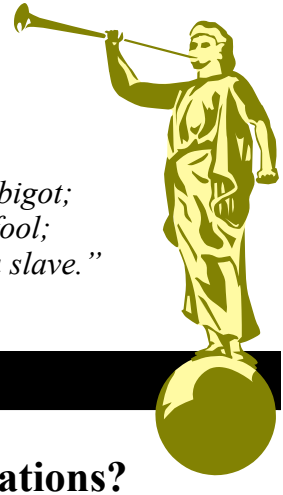
- When we live in neighborhoods with those who are not part of this work are we fully fulfilling the law of gathering ourselves?
- Could we ever live the law of consecration fully whilst in such a situation?
- What can we do individually and collectively to remedy this?

Each of us need to live as true Saints and servants of God, each of our homes need to be a refuge from the world, and the communities we live in need to be places of spiritual fellowship and co-operation. Because if we are not living in such a condition we will be giving Satan all the ways he needs to try to break apart what God has offered us, and we will be in danger of reaping the same curses He has in store for the rest of the world. The Lord though has designated the remedy to such dangers (if we will follow his prescription with heart, mind, and spirit): "Come to Zion! Come to Zion!"

> Go ye out from among the nations, even from Babylon, from the midst of wickedness, which is spiritual Babylon. *(D&C 133:14)*

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel



"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."

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Wrongful Excommunication?

Excommunication is the strictest punishment any Church can carry out. It is usually reserved for those who commit heinous sins, such as sexual abuse, adultery or murder, and those who have renounced their faith or have actively fought against it.

It is meant to show the sinner the seriousness of their actions, and usually comes with the offer of later reconciliation if the person 'cut off' proves to be repentant and to have changed their ways.

During the dark ages excommunication meant torture and death, even for those who admitted their wrongs and asked for forgiveness. Nevertheless, some felt that they could not defy their consciences or give up their personal beliefs and were burnt at the stake, firm in the belief that God justified them and that a heavenly reward awaited.

Even in our day some religions use the threat of excommunication as a means of insuring conformity from their members, and to stifle any sign of discontent. Who would look forward to the prospect of losing friends, being shunned by family members, and sometimes the risk of losing a job or a home as well? Who knows how many of those investigating or accepting the restored Gospel turned away from it at the last moment because of such pressures?

Throughout time some true Saints have been excommunicated for doing what is right, sometimes by those seeking to cover their own wrong-doings. In the days of Jesus he warned those who followed him, "They shall put you out of the synagogues."[1] Indeed it was not much later that the leaders of the Jewish church, "agreed that anyone who confessed him to be Christ should be excommunicated."[2]

This must have presented quite a dilemma to the ancient Christians, who had probably been taught from their youth to respect their church leaders. They were told Jesus was a false prophet, and that he was guilty of blasphemy. They probably reason that, "There are so many more of us. Our faith has been around so long, and your family, friends, and many learned and powerful people believe it. How can you be right and us all be wrong?" Many of those who join the LDS Church today are told much the same things by their ministers.

Undoubtedly there are many people who are disfellowshipped from their faith because of the misunderstandings that can occur through the imperfections of human understanding, or because of rumors that became exaggerated, yet had no basis in truth.

This is why it is so important that the safeguards the Lord has laid down for carrying out disciplinary courts should be followed exactly. Firstly, the accused must be aware of what he is accused of, and have an

1 John 16:2

2 John 9:22 Moffatt translation.

opportunity to adequately defend himself. No decision or action should be taken without him being first given such a chance. As the Gospel of John asks, "Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" No! " In all cases the accuser and the accused shall have a privilege of speaking for themselves before the council ..."[3]

Until such time, as a trial happens the character of the accused should not be brought into disrepute in any way. Even the High Councilors should not be informed of any accusations without the accused being present and able to defend himself, Joseph Smith pointed out that this was necessary so that, "the minds of the councilors be not prejudiced for or against any one whose case they may possibly have to act upon."[4] Even with this stipulation in place, Brigham Young still warned of the possibility that, "Some, with trifling consideration, can so prejudice the mind of a High Councilor, a High Priest, a Bishop, or an Apostle, that he will lean to the individual instead of truth."[5]

Of course there may be times when a crime is committed so publicly that it is impossible to keep it quiet, although in many cases such as that there are no lack of witnesses to what happened, and the accused will rarely protest their innocence. Under ancient law though, there had to be two witnesses to any crime, for "at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."[6] Although in some cases a person acts as a witness against themselves by the inconsistencies in their defense or by admitting the wrongs they are accused of. Nevertheless, they still must be offered an opportunity to explain themselves.

Another protection given to accused is that they have "a right to one-half of the council," to act as their defense" and "to prevent insult or injustice."[7] Following the accuser and accused having an opportunity to speak, the High Councilors can ask questions for themselves, and subsequently deliberate the case.

Those who have to make such serious decisions should have the welfare in mind of any victims, as well as those who have been accused. Their deliberations must "be made in all righteousness, in holiness, and lowliness of heart, meekness and long suffering, and in faith, and virtue, and knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity;"[8] They must remember that excommunication should usually be the last resort:

> "Those who are entrusted with power to excommunicate must act in truth and righteousness in their official duties. They are

3 D&C 102:18
4 History of the Church 1:451.
5 J.D. 10:42
6 Deuteronomy 19:15
7 D&C 102:15
8 D&C 107:30

> not authorized to cut off any live limb, or any inactive particle of the body which may be warmed, or quickened or encouraged into life. Sin and transgression, or positive discord with the system, must exist before excommunication is justifiable."[9]

If anger motivates any of those making such judgments rather than love they would be wiser to withdraw from making such decisions. They must remember that as well as their purpose being to alert a person to the seriousness of their transgression they are also there to encourage those who have done wrong to reform where that is possible. That although sometimes their role requires "Reproving betimes with sharpness, when moved upon by the Holy Ghost;" it also requires, "then showing forth afterwards an increase of love toward him whom thou hast reproved, lest he esteem thee to be his enemy;"[10]

Despite these safeguards mistakes still can and sometimes are made. It is sadly "the nature and disposition of almost all men, as soon as they get a little authority," to "immediately begin to exercise unrighteous dominion."[11] When such men are in positions of authority this can sometimes lead to errors of judgment. Francis M. Lyman of the Quorum of Twelve, commented that in his day, some were wrongly cut off "because they did not come up to the particular standard of perfection of those who dealt with them"[12]. As human imperfections are as prevalent now as ever, this remains as much a danger as it has ever been. A few stories I am personally aware of may help illustrate these points:

A very conscientious High Councilman in the England Birmingham Stake found himself at odds with the Stake President and most of the rest of the High Council. It was reported that someone in the local Church leadership was seen smoking a cigarette, although the person accused denied it. The Stake presidency and nine of the High Council were convinced the man was lying and felt he should be excommunicated. But this one High Councilor objected, stating that 1) he believed that as there was only one witness against the accused that the witness could have been mistaken, 2) even if the man had broken the word of wisdom that is not a sufficient reason for excommunication, 3) even if others felt the man was lying there was no way it could be

9 Francis M. Lyman, Millennial Star, 40:263

10 D&C 121:42

11 D&C 121:39

12 Millennial Star 24:99. This reminds us of the words of Brigham Young, "How many there are who come to me to find fault with, and enter complaints against, their brethren, for some trifling thing, when I can see, in a moment, that they have received no intentional injury! They have no compassion on their brethren, but, having passed their judgment, insist that the criminal shall be punished. And why? Because he does not exactly come up to their standard of right and wrong! They feel to measure him by the 'Iron Bedstead principle' - 'if you are too long, you must be cut off; if too short, you must be stretched.' Now this is the height of folly." (JD 1:6)

proved. Despite these objections, the Stake Presidency decided to take action against the man. Undaunted, this lone High Priest wrote to the First Presidency alerting them to his reservations, and directly due to this the accused man avoided excommunication. Two other High Councilors had reservations but didn't want to be seen as objecting to the Stake President, so if this one man had not stood up for what he felt was right, a wrongful excommunication would have occurred.

Such cases, although rare, do happen from time to time. During the Second World War, some over-zealous Bishops alienated or took action against members of their ward who did not support the Nazi party. One young man named Herbert Heubener, whose life has since been made into a book and film, was excommunicated for opposing Hitler, although he was later reinstated. Many such reinstatements have occurred throughout Church history, some of them decades after the death of those cut off.[13]

Nevertheless, it is the responsibility of those incorrectly accused or unrighteously judged to appeal in the hope they will find justice in this life. A revelation of the Lord to Joseph Smith details this procedure: "Should the parties or either of them be dissatisfied with the decision of said council, they may appeal to the high council of the seat of the First Presidency of the Church, and have a re-hearing, which case shall there be conducted, according to the former pattern written, as though no such decision had been made." Therefore the Church Presidency should not be swayed by even the testimony of the High Councilors and Stake Presidency, but should grant a fair and impartial rehearing, as if the first trail never happened. Sadly this opportunity no longer seems to be available except in a very few number of cases.

If this were not enough to ensure an impartial judgment there was yet another opportunity for the accused to put forward their case "before a general assembly of the several quorums, which constitute the spiritual authorities of the church."[14] So that the whole conference of presiding Priesthood quorums and their leaders could hear and judge for themselves. Controversial LDS author Paul Toscano requested such an opportunity in 1993 after his excommunication, but no response was ever given to his request, so we may assume that this opportunity no longer exists either. The great number of members the Church now has inevitably led to such safeguards being discarded, and sadly this has increased the danger that some innocent Saints have been overlooked in the process.

There is an even higher court of appeal though, that is never closed and always grants an impartial hearing. God is the judge of it, and His judgments will ultimately be recognized and carried out, despite

13 Such as the reinstatement of John W. Taylor in May 1965, 54 years after his excommunication.

14 D&C 107:32

what mistakes any earthly leaders may make. God will vindicate the innocent in time or eternity, that is one promise they can rely on.

Yet imperfections in members of the Church, whether they are leaders or not, does not mean that the Gospel is any less than perfect though, but it does show us the danger in relying too much on others judgments, and how ultimately we can only fully trust God as judge. As Mosiah puts it plainly, "it is better that a man should be judged of God than of man, for the judgments of God are always just, but the judgments of man are not always just."[15]

Of course, we all have the privilege of seeking personal revelation, but even though our local leaders and us have that opportunity, this does not mean that they are not prone to sometimes mistake their own feelings for those of the Spirit. Brigham Young, always plain spoken, commented on this very problem in his day:

> "Does our High Council ['know their right hand from their left']? No, for they will let men throw dust in their eyes, until you cannot find the hundredth millionth part of an ounce of common sense in them.
>
> You may go to the Bishop's courts, and what are they? A set of old grannies. They cannot judge a case pending between two old women, to say nothing of a case between a man and a man."[16]

Those who make false accusations and those who believe them and thereby deprive their fellow Saints of Church fellowship and privileges will have to answer one day for their actions though, as an official Church periodical warned them that, "woe unto them who cut men and women off the Church for private pique, or to exercise undue dominion, or for any reason not prompted by truth and righteousness."[17]

Whenever there are those insecure in their beliefs (or themselves) a certain proportion of them will try to enforce everyone around them to conform to their views, and try to stifle the opinions of those that differ with them. Joseph Smith lamented that once a Church court "called up" and "old man ... for erring in doctrine," and how this was more like the "Methodists" who had "creeds which a man must believe or be asked out of their Church." Even if a persons opinion is wrong the Prophet told us that, "It does not prove that a man is not a good man because he errs in doctrine."[18] How could we claim to "allow **all men**" " the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of [their] own conscience,"[19] if that Article of Faith only applied to those

15 Mosiah 29:12
16 J.D. 3:225.
17 Millennial Star, 40:263
18 History of the Church 5:340
19 Article of Faith 11

outside of the Church?

Sadly, however, it has often been the most faithful Saints who have faced the most prejudices, the bitterest feelings, and the great persecution, not only from those outside the faith, but those inside also. Some may feel that such a situation could not arise in our day though, as we are more educated or more righteous than generations past, but the scriptures tell us that "there is nothing new under the sun,"[20] and that we should not proclaim "all is well in Zion."[21] So why should we think that we are exempt from the same problems? The earlier prophets of this dispensation not only warned that such things could happen, but prophesied that they would:

> Joseph Smith foretold Mosiah Hancock, "You will live to see men arise in power in the Church who will seek to put down your friends and the friends of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Many will be hoisted because of their money and the worldly learning which they seem to be in possession of; and many who are the true followers of our Lord and Savior will be cast down because of their poverty."[22]
>
> John Taylor also told a select group of his most trusted brethren that, "Some of you will be handled and ostracized and cast out from the Church by your brethren because of your faithfulness and integrity ... but woe, woe, unto those who shall bring these troubles upon you."[23]

What is the position of those who might be wrongly cut off? Does the Spirit leave them? Is their lack of membership in the Church still a stumbling block to their exaltation? An early LDS editorial by one of the Apostles answered this: "Persons sometimes say that they have enjoyed the spirit of the work as much since they were cut off as while they were in the Church. Have they enjoyed the Spirit? Yes. Why? Simply because they were wrongfully cut off."[24]

The Lord would not punish a person in eternity for the improper actions of an earthly Church leader, and if the Lord would not abandon them then neither should we, not without risking condemnation ourselves. Those who excommunicated them (or tried to) lost the Lord's approval the moment they acted wrongly and their actions have no standing before God. This is because the Priesthood they held is

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20 Ecclesiastes 1:19.

21 "And others will he pacify, and lull them away into carnal security, that they will say: All is well in Zion; yea, Zion prospereth, all is well—and thus the devil cheateth their souls, and leadeth them away carefully down to hell." (2 Nephi 28:21)

22 Mosiah Hancock Journal, p. 19.

23 Lorin C. Woolley account of September 1886 meeting, 1929.

24 Millennial Star 24:100

conditional on them acting on God's behalf and with His approval, for "the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only upon the principles of righteousness." Because "when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, our vain ambition, or to exercise control or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men, in any degree of unrighteousness, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the priesthood or the authority of that man."[25] God is not subject to the policies and procedures of the Church, His power transcends it.

If those who cut off wrongly may lose their Priesthood, what of the Priesthood of those they excommunicated? Would a just God no longer honor their administrations? Excommunication is solely an act of the Church, it only effects a persons activity within the Church, not within their own family. Only sin or real apostasy causes the heavens to withdraw their power from a man who honors his Priesthood.[26] President Joseph F. Smith clarified this issue for us: "No endowments or blessings in the House of the Lord, no patriarchal blessings, no ordination to the Priesthood, can be taken away, once given."[27]

Some faiths (such as the Jehovah Witnesses) would bar those they have disfellowshipped from their places of worship, but the Book of Mormon and latter-day revelation makes it clear that the LDS Church should not do the same to others: "ye shall not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together,"[28] said the Savior to the Nephites, which he later repeated in even stronger terms to the Prophet Joseph: "ye are commanded never to cast any one out from your public meetings,which are held before the world."[29] Public Sacrament meetings are to be open to the public, they are a chance for the righteous and sinners, the members and the excommunicated to ponder on the words of inspiration given in talks, and to remember their covenants during the passing of the Sacrament.

To those who feel they have been wronged it is easy to become angry and bitter, and even in some cases to become as bad as the person they were wrongly accused of being. Whatever the actions of others, no matter how they may try to prejudice others against us, we must remain guiltless of the ill feelings others may have had against us. We must just be content to leave justice in the hand of God. He has offered those in that position this consolation: "Your brethren that hated you, that cast

25 D&C 121:36-37.

26 John Taylor: "You cannot take any man's priesthood away without transgression." (Times & Seasons 6:922)

27 Improvement Era 11:466. Importantly, President Smith added that, "To prevent a person for cause from exercising the rights and privileges of acting in the offices of the Priesthood, may be and has been done, and the person so silenced still remain a member of the Church, but this does not take away from him any Priesthood that he held."

28 3 Nephi 18:22, see 2 Nephi 26:26 & Alma 6:5.

29 D&C 46:3, see Unpublished Revelations 8:24.

you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."[30]

Alma came upon those put out of the synagogues in his day, and realized that even their situation could have a positive aspect to it, and could teach them an important lesson they may not have adequately learned otherwise:

> "I say unto you, it is well that ye are cast out of your synagogues, that ye may be humble, and that ye may learn wisdom; for it is necessary that ye should learn wisdom; for it is because that ye are cast out, that ye are despised of your brethren because of your exceeding poverty, that ye are brought to a lowliness of heart; for ye are necessarily brought to be humble.
>
> And now, because ye are compelled to be humble blessed are ye; for a man sometimes, if he is compelled to be humble, seeketh repentance; and now surely, whosoever repenteth shall find mercy; and he that findeth mercy and endureth to the end the same shall be saved."[31]

Even such excommunications can ultimately be a blessing to those who suffer them. It removes them from the unrighteous dominion of those who cut them off, and it stops their reliance upon the activities of the Church and more upon their personal relationship with God. God knows their hearts and will record them accordingly, and we will be judged on how we judge them, and what compassion and acceptance we show to them, despite the rumors and pressures from others.

> "Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from among them, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake.
>
> Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets."[32]

Related Information

There is another type of excommunication that is of no spiritual effect, that is when excommunication is done for merely public show, to satisfy non-Mormons or those weak in the faith, but is regarded as only a 'mock trial' by Church or Priesthood leaders, and which makes no real difference to the individuals standing in the faith.

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30 Isaiah 66:5
31 Alma 32:12-13.
32 Luke 6:22-23.

One example of this is during Joseph Smith's day at which point Plural Marriage was against Church rules[33] and anyone practicing it was liable for excommunication, yet it was also revealed by God to be a law that Joseph Smith and others had to live. Realizing the Church members were not yet ready for this divine principle, Joseph did not remove the rule against it, although this ultimately left him – even though he was Church President – liable to being cut off from the Church.

Joseph Smith was not the only one who risked his Church membership by living this way, some of his closest associates risked theirs too. One of them, William Clayton, wrote about it in his journal at the time. His plural wife was pregnant with his child and he was worried that if he was 'found out' that he would be excommunicated. Joseph admitted that this might indeed happen, and proposed an interesting solution to him, "if they raise trouble about [your second wife] and bring you before me I will give you an awful scourging and probably cut you off from the church and then I will baptize you and set you ahead as good as ever."[34]

It is hard to say exactly how many Saints may have been publicly cut off, whilst still being considered fully in the faith by those who excommunicated them. We know that post-Manifesto advocate of Plural Marriage Matthias F. Cowley, though officially disfellowshipped, still carried on in full activity – including using his Priesthood – seemingly with the knowledge and sanction of those who dealt with him.

Not only was such a situation considered for individual members, but all of the Church members in Idaho were recommended by Wilford Woodruff to apply for excommunication, so they could vote, as their state did not allow Mormons (even monogamous ones) to take part in elections.[35]

These facts remind us once again that earthly excommunication may indeed be of no spiritual effect and no eternal significance, and that if it does not always matter to God what a persons standing in the Church is, then we should judge very carefully before condemning those excommunicated, especially where they were cut off for their beliefs and adherence to principles.

"There is a principle which is a bar against all information.
Which is proof against all argument

33 D&C 110:4 (1835 edition, removed in 1876)
34 William Clayton Diary, 19 October 1843
35 12 Oct 1888, Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power

and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance – that principle is condemnation before investigation."

(Herbert Spencer)

Questions for 'Independent' Mormon Fundamentalists on Priesthood Authority and Celestial Plural Marriage

What is an Independent Mormon Fundamentalist?

In common with Mormon Fundamentalists who are aligned with a specific claim of authority or organized group, 'Independents' believe that they must practice Plural Marriage in this life to gain exaltation in eternity. Most of them also believe in other unique early LDS teachings, such as the Adam-God doctrine. They commonly believe that Wilford Woodruff was a fallen prophet (or that John Taylor was the last true prophet), and that some time after the Manifesto the Church fell into apostasy. Where they differ with those who belong to an 'organized' Fundamentalist group is that they believe that the authority to perform Plural marriages has been lost, is inaccessible, is unnecessary, or is vested in a few people who – whilst they have that authority – do not necessarily preside over them (in a Priesthood capacity).

The first Independent Fundamentalists believed[1] – in common with all other Fundamentalists at the time – that John Taylor had set apart men to keep alive Plural Marriages, but differed from Fundamentalists groups by believing that either the authority those men had was passed to a remote Indian Prophet (set apart by Lorin Woolley)[2] or that men set apart in this calling had apostatized themselves (during the time John Y. Barlow, Joseph Musser and Rulon Allred were in jail),[3] and so they feel that it has been left to them as individuals, in their families and with friends to keep alive the Gospel in their lives.

Although the Press have highlighted the extreme examples of some who have claimed to be Independent Fundamentalists, most Independents are typified by men like Ogden Kraut, the peaceable publisher of books on early Mormon doctrine.

Unlike the largest Fundamentalist groups most Independents do not live in exclusive communities, most are not involved in trying to live the Law of Consecration with other families (although a few are), and most do not meet together religiously with other families and individuals on a regular basis to partake of the Sacrament.[4]

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1 The first Independents appeared in the mid-1930s at the death of Woolley or J. Leslie Broadbent. Their movement grew most after the death of Joseph Musser however.

2 The view of Francis M. Darter, and also espoused by Rhea Kunz and Lynn Bishop.

3 The view of Louis Kelsch?

4 Some have suggested that Independents are the largest 'group' of Mormon Fundamentalists, yet this should not be taken to suggest that they are the largest group living Plural Marriage. The large number of monogamist Independents is probably due to a lack of regular association with others who have similar beliefs (when compared to those in organized groups).

Converts to Fundamentalism usually come through personal study of the early doctrines of the Church. This study may be prompted by a change in the Church, by a family member becoming a Fundamentalist (or being brought up in a Fundamentalist family), an association with someone who is one, or simply by individual study of the teachings of Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and other early LDS Authorities.

Finding out that the modern Church is so different in its beliefs from what it once taught can leave a member feeling betrayed. They often lose confidence in those leaders that made such changes and any since (unless they believe that the earlier prophets were wrong in the first place). They may go to their local leaders initially with questions, but will tend to find them ignorant of such doctrines (at least in any depth), and a conflict often arises about whether a member can hold such views and be in good standing. The conduct of some members towards them during and after an excommunication for their beliefs can also leave them feeling angry towards a Church they see as having altered the Gospel, cut them off, and allowing (if not encouraging) them being alienated from family and former friends.

After such an experience it is difficult for many to imagine trusting anyone who claims authority. They once thought their Church leaders had it, what guarantee is there that anyone else does? Perhaps in their studies they have seen the examples of some Fundamentalist leaders or groups that seem to repeat some of the faults they saw in the Church or are worse (perhaps they found this out by joining one such group for a period of time). These things are not likely to inspire any confidence in even considering another's authority. It may indeed seem safer to separate from all who make such claims and to just seek to live the Gospel as an individual or with your own family. They may be worried about making a mistake again, or perhaps are waiting to be prompted before considering seriously any claims to authority. Because of reasons such as these they come to view themselves (or are so considered by others to be) Independent Mormon Fundamentalists.

They are to be congratulated for their dedication to their beliefs without the benefit of fellowship and support from others. There are many areas which we would both agree that the Lord expects us to be independent – He intends us to be independent thinkers, to be able to be independent from the world, and to have be able to receive independently revelation from heaven for our own salvation.

Some of the criticisms and generalizations Independents make of Fundamentalist groups are probably justified – wherever you have a large group of religious people you will always have those amongst them who are inclined to follow unquestioningly and try to put the responsibility of their exaltation upon their leader, you will always find

those who live hypocritically – hiding behind their religious face to mask very unholy deeds, and will find those who try to abuse any responsibility they are given to demand obedience of others.

These are genuine worries and real dangers, and yet such attitudes and actions also existed in the days of Joseph Smith and Brigham Young, although those brethren made clear their feelings on such things and their disappointment regarding them. Is it possible then that some Independents expect a degree of perfection that has never existed amongst God's people or ever from His prophets?

What About the Issue of Priesthood Authority?

I have always believed that a sincere question deserves a good answer, and it is my hope that those reading this do too (especially those who are Independents), as I have some questions I would like to hear their answers to, and it is in the sincere spirit of wanting to learn and understand their views and have them understand mine that I would like to begin posing some questions on the subject of Priesthood authority and succession. I am ready to admit that my knowledge and understanding is limited as with all of us finite mortals, and I am also willing to acknowledge my weakness in trying to express myself in such important matters. So I ask those reading this article to consider firstly the words of the prophets quoted here, and to try to look past my weaknesses in language to see the points made within the scriptures that I but try to paraphrase. Let us consider these things carefully, our exaltation is dependent upon the issues that will be addressed, and by what our views and answers are.

One Authorizer of the Keys of the Priesthood and the Higher Ordinances?

It seems to be a common belief amongst Independents that there is no mortal head of the Priesthood on earth today, and that the keys of the Priesthood (and the right to use them) are either held equally by many men (perhaps even all those with Melchizedek Priesthood), or such keys are entirely absent from the world.

This is a crucial question that if we wish to be exalted we cannot escape needing to find the answer to. As Joseph Smith stated, "it is necessary to know who holds the keys of power, and who does not or we are likely to be deceived."[5] If it was important then, when only one person was claiming such keys, then it is even more important now when there are no shortage of claimants.

To begin to answer this question let us go back to one of the greatest events in the restoration of the Gospel was the visitation of John

5 TPJS p. 336

the Baptist, and the Apostle's Peter, James and John. Without their visit we would have been left without the ability to baptize, to lay on hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost, to bless the Sacrament, or to ordain to the Priesthood so we would have authority to do these things. From that point on the authority existed to ordain Priests, Elders, Seventies, Apostles, Bishops and Patriarchs. This did not however yet give the right to seal families, and to perform other higher ordinances. Those keys came with the visit of Elijah (and others) to the Kirtland temple in 1836,[6] and these keys and some of the ordinances associated with them were not fully given until as late as 1843.[7] These facts are important because they show us that one can be an Elder without having such keys and authority (as all Elders were before 1836), and that the existence of these keys does not mean they are automatically conferred on those who have the Melchizedek Priesthood (as only a few received such keys in 1843, prior to Joseph's death).

To those who believe these keys are no longer on the earth (or were lost, or re-restored through them) we would draw attention to the Lord's promises in the Doctrine and Covenants that "the keys of [God's] kingdom, and a dispensation of the gospel" have been committed "for the last times; and for the fullness of times"[8] and "from thence shall the gospel roll forth unto the ends of the earth ... until it has filled the whole earth."[9]

There are many Independents who believe that the Priesthood they hold (as an Elder, Seventy, High Priest, or fatherly patriarch) is sufficient to allow them to perform sealings, and it it certainly true that there have always been men of all the different Melchizedek Priesthood offices performing sealings. This has led some to conclude that just having the Priesthood is sufficient to seal men and women in eternal marriage, but this forgets one inconvenient fact: all those who performed such sealings in the days of Joseph Smith to Wilford Woodruff only had approval to do so because those prophets gave it to them. If they acted without the approval of their presiding Priesthood head then they were liable to be punished for doing so – because they went beyond the bounds of their responsibilities. To illustrate this - in his day Brigham Young dropped someone from the First Council of Seventy because he "transcended the bounds of the Priesthood in the ordinance of sealing."[10] Likewise Joseph Smith forthrightly told his Brother Hyrum when he "did in one case undertake to seal without counsel" that "if he did not stop it he would go to Hell"[11]

The Lord established a pattern in regards to Priesthood authority,

6 D&C 110:16
7 Joseph Smith diary, 28 September 1943.
8 D&C 27:13, see 90:2 & 112:30.
9 D&C 65:2
10 Andrew Jenson, LDS Biographical Encyclopedia 1:194.
11 Brigham Young to William Smith, August 10, 1845, in William Smith Papers.

that "the keys of the kingdom" will "belong always unto the Presidency of the High Priesthood:"[12] It is true that the counselors (Apostles) of this Priesthood head are given keys in common,[13] yet no-one else holds the same responsibility to authorize or withhold the use of them as the he does, which is what the Lord meant when He told Joseph Smith that "there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of the priesthood are conferred."[14] All others lack some degree of that power, and only exercise what power they are given by it being delegated to them. The Lord felt this important enough to confirm this again in revelation to John Taylor in 1882: "No person, or people, or nation can enter into the principle of celestial marriage unless they come in by me, saith the Lord, and obey the law of my Gospel through the medium of him who is appointed unto this power, as made known unto my people through my servant, Joseph"[15] If there was still any doubt in this matter, Joseph Smith revealed it all when he said, "that the sealing power is always vested in one man, and that there never was, nor never would be, but one man on the earth at a time to hold the keys of the sealing power in the Church. That all sealings must be performed by the man holding the keys, or by his dictation"[16]

Many might argue that the man who presided over these keys became a fallen prophet, and that so did all the Apostles who held them, and that the keys were lost thereby. But the Lord had already prepared for such a possibility, and instructed Joseph Smith that if his authority was "taken from him" he would still retain the power "to appoint another in his stead."[17] Because only through him could "the 'oracles' be given to another."[18] The Lord tells us we do not need to look elsewhere, for "he that is ordained of me shall come in at the gate and be ordained as I have told you."[19]

It seems to me to be a question of whether or not we believe in the Lord's promises. To summarize: He has promised that the keys would continue, that someone would preside over those keys, that only they could authorizes plural marriages and other higher ordinances, and that even if they were to go astray only through them could a successor come. Joseph Smith also made it clear that only through this presiding

12 D&C 81:2, see D&C 107:21
13 1880 revelation to Wilford Woodruff, Unpublished Revelations 79:79. See D&C 90:6.
14 D&C 132:7
15 Uncanonized Revelation to John Taylor 25/26 June 1882. Unpublished Revelations 80:6-7.
16 Letter of Brigham Young to William Smith, previously cited. Note: In Joseph and Brigham's day that man was also President of the Church, but as pointed out in the revelation we before cited he is also (and more importantly) President of the Priesthood.
17 D&C 43:5, see 28:7
18 D&C 90:4
19 D&C 43:7

Priesthood head could plural marriages that would last throughout the eternities be authorized with the correct authority necessary to be recognized by God.

The question I would look for my Independent friends to answer in response to this is – "Is there any indication that any of what has already been quoted is inaccurate in any way?" If not, "are there any scriptures, revelations, or statements by prophets in harmony with what has already been quoted that would allow the keys of the Priesthood to be lost?" or "is there anything that would allow anyone to act in regard to the higher ordinances (such as Celestial Plural Marriage) without the authorization of the person in that position?" Seeing that we are all Fundamentalists who believe in unchanging Gospel, with unchanging laws and ordinances, then "can anyone qualify for their exaltation in this life without following the pattern (laid down through Joseph Smith) of receiving the highest ordinances through the authorization of a living man presiding over all the keys of the Priesthood?" The question we must all ask ourselves is "what position does this place me in?" Those who do not have the answers to these questions stand in peril every moment until they do, and I pray they will not cease studying and praying until they have the answer they need.

In our next article we will look at the promises from God and His promises that all of the Gospel would continue, and how it is relevant to Independent Fundamentalists.

Summary

Points made

"there is never but one on the earth at a time on whom this power and the keys of the priesthood are conferred."

- He has promised that the keys would continue
- that someone would preside over those keys
- that only they could authorizes plural marriages and other higher ordinances
- that even if they were to go astray only through them could a successor come.
- that only through this presiding Priesthood head could plural marriages that would last throughout the eternities be authorized with the correct authority necessary to be recognized by God.

Questions asked

"No person, or people, or nation can enter into the principle of celestial marriage unless they come in by me, saith the Lord, and obey the law of my Gospel through the medium of him who is appointed unto this power"

- "Is there any indication that any of what has already been quoted is inaccurate in any way?"
- "Are there any scriptures, revelations, or statements by prophets in harmony with what has already been quoted that would allow the keys of the Priesthood to be lost?"
- *"Is there anything that would indicate that the ways the keys work would change from the way they are defined in the scriptures and by the prophets quoted?"*
- "Is there anything that would allow anyone to act in regard to the higher ordinances (such as Celestial Plural Marriage) without the authorization of the person in that position?" (If it was wrong to seal without authority in the early days of the Gospel then when and where did God say He changed this?)
- "Can anyone qualify for their exaltation in this life without following the pattern (laid down through Joseph Smith) of receiving the highest ordinances through the authorization of a living man presiding over all the keys of the Priesthood?"
- "What position does this place [you] in?"

Additional Supporting Quotes

"No man in Utah, who already has a wife, and who may desire to obtain another, has any right to make any propositions of marriage to a lady, until he has consulted the President over the whole Church, and through him obtains a revelation from God, as to whether it would be pleasing in His sight. If he is forbidden by revelation, that ends the matter." *(Orson Pratt, The Seer)*

"Brother Brigham holds the keys of this kingdom and nobody else holds them as

he does. Others hold keys, but they hold them under him." *(Heber C. Kimball, 13 Feb 1853, TPBY 3:173)*

"Never is there but one appointed at a time to hold the keys of the kingdom of God pertaining to the earth." *(Joseph F. Smith, JD 24:191)*

"There may be others who have this authority also; and I thank God there are many who hold this authority – that is the authority of the Apostleship; but they hold it subordinate to the man who holds the keys, they cannot exercise this authority only as he shall consent or delegate or authorize them to do so. There is but one man who has the power to exercise this authority, to stand, as it were, in God's stead, to be His voice unto the people, and that is the man who stands at the head and who is President, and who holds the keys by virtue of the appointment of God." *(George Q. Cannon, JD 24:274-5, see 13:49 & 23:364)*

"The man who cannot listen to an argument which opposes his views either has a weak position or is a weak defender of it. No opinion that cannot stand discussion or criticism is worth holding."
(Improvement Era 23:204, January 1920)

Heber J. Grant – Prophet of God?
or just President of the Church?

At the death of President Joseph F. Smith the LDS Church stood at a crossroads. He was the last Church leader alive to have known the Prophet Joseph, and was the last prophet at the head of the Church who lived Plural Marriage whilst in that calling. With his passing came the end of an era. Who could fill his shoes?

The most senior Apostle at the death of Joseph F. Smith was John W. Young. He had been ordained an Apostle in 1855[1], 27 years before Heber J. Grant, who was next most senior. But Elder Young was never called to the Quorum of Twelve, it seems he wasn't considered for succession a candidate by the rest of the Twelve, and he didn't seem to seek or contest Grant's appointment. This may surprise many Church members who may have assumed that all the Apostles are members of the Quorum of the Twelve, and that there has ever been any question – even amongst the Apostles – as to who was qualified to lead.

Since the presidency of Lorenzo Snow, the Church had filled the office of Church President automatically after the death of the previous President,[2] and so the question of who would be the next President was already decided by seniority in the Quorum of Twelve. President Brigham Young, however, made it clear that a man being President of the Church didn't necessarily make them Prophet, and that God calls prophets, but that the people appoint Presidents of the Church.[3]

To answer the question of who succeeded President Smith as prophet and holder of the keys of the Priesthood we will look at the man most Latter-day Saints believe fulfilled that role – Heber Jeddy Grant.

Heber was the son of Brigham Young's counselor, Jedediah Grant, and was born 22 Nov 1856. His father, however, died when he was still a baby. Even as a youth he became an effective businessman, and although his mother had hopes of him becoming a leader of the Church he told her at the time to "get it out of your head ... I do not want

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1 Born 1 October 1844 in Nauvoo. Son of Brigham Young, who ordained him, 22 November 1855 (at age 11). Re-ordained 4 February 1864, and made an assistant councilor to the First Presidency (although not publicly sustained until 8 April 1873). Became a councilor to the Quorum of Twelve, 4 September 1877. Resigned as Counselor and released, 3-6 October 1891 (reasons for resignation DNW 10 Oct 1891, p. 508). Died 11 February 1924 in New York (considered a worthy Latter-day Saint at time of death).

2 On the 5th of April 1900 it was decided that seniority would be by the date someone entered the quorum and not by the date ordained.

3 "Does a man's being a Prophet in this Church prove that he shall be the President of it? I answer, no! A man may be a Prophet, Seer and Revelator, and it may have nothing to do with his being the President of the Church. Suffice it to say, that Joseph was the President of the Church, as long as he lived; the people chose to have it so." (JD 1:133)

to be an Apostle! ... I do not want to be anything but a business man!"[4] Yet he found himself being given Priesthood responsibilities beyond his years from the age of 15 when he was ordained a Seventy, and by the time he was 23 he was called as a Stake President.

Yet despite perhaps having the emotional maturity of such a high calling at such a young age, there is some question over whether he had the necessary spiritual maturity. This is illustrated by a conversation he had with Joseph F. Smith (who was then a member of the First Presidency). Heber had confided in Joseph that he could not seem to speak with the Spirit, to which President Smith asked him if he knew the gospel was true. Grant admitted "No, I do not know it!"[5] Smith hoped to release him after hearing this, and coincidentally the majority of the members in his stake actually voted not to sustain Heber,[6] however, he somehow managed to remain in his position.

It is important to remember that during this era of the Church's history, Plural Marriage was not just recommended, but mandated for Church leaders. It was a "law of the Priesthood" that was considered essential to exaltation. In light of this it is interesting to learn of a particular case that came before him whilst he was a Stake President. It seems that some time between 1880 and 1882 President Grant had some disagreement with Bishop Samuel Woolley, and the Bishop objected to Heber trying to correct him, because Heber was still monogamous and Woolley was living a higher law, and therefore outside of his jurisdiction.

We'll take up the story from an account given by the son of the Assistant Church Historian at the time: "Brother Grant took the question up with his file leaders, President John Taylor and counselors. They instructed him that Brother Woolley was right, since he (Brother Grant) was not living or abiding in the law, he was not qualified to direct Brother Woolley who was faithfully abiding in that law."[7]

This principle was reiterated by the Lord in a revelation to President Taylor in October 1882, which called Heber J. Grant and two others to greater positions of authority:

> "Thus saith the Lord to the Twelve, and to the Priesthood and people of my Church: ...
>
> You may appoint Seymour B. Young to fill up the vacancy in the presiding quorum of Seventies, if he will conform to my law: For it is not meet that men who will not abide my law shall preside over my Priesthood; ...
>
> For my Priesthood, whom I have called and whom I have

4 Gospel Standards, p. 11.
5 Heber J. Grant, Improvement Era, July 1939.
6 Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power (D. Michael Quinn), Appendix 2 – Heber J. Grant / Mormon Experience, p. 659.
7 Joseph Musser's 'autobiographical' journal, p. 68-9

sustained and honored, shall honor one and obey my laws, and the laws of my Holy Priesthood, or they shall not be considered worthy to hold my Priesthood, saith the Lord."[8]

The law which Seymour Young was not living that the Lord required him to before he could preside was Celestial (Plural) Marriage. At the time he had only one wife (Ann Riter), but in order to keep this law he later married again (Abbie Wells). John Taylor made it clear how he understood the revelation himself when he stated on the day he received it, "A man obeying a lesser law is not qualified to preside over those who keep a higher law."[9]

In accordance with these divine instructions Heber married two additional wives (his first being Lucy Stringham whom he married in 1877, Huldah Winters and Emily Wells a day apart in May 1884. Thus he began to qualify to fulfill his responsibilities as an Apostle of the Lord.

Even with his call to the Apostleship, at least one of the Quorum of Twelve, John Henry Smith, continued to doubt his spiritual qualifications and complained that Heber did not have "a testimony of the truth."[10] Worries about Grant's testimony and intentions continued, and L. John Nuttall (secretary to Wilford Woodruff) later commented that he worried "for the welfare of the Church and kingdom" as, in his opinion, "financial matters [had] more weight with ... Brother Heber J. Grant than the things of the Kingdom."[11] Others worried about Grant's mental health, as he had suffered a nervous breakdown just prior to being an Apostle, and would suffer more later in life.[12] Despite these concerns he remained a member of the Quorum of Twelve.

Just as he had later publicly admitted he didn't have a testimony when he was a Stake President, as an Apostle he confided privately in his fellow Quorum members that he "had never had an inspired dream in his life" and that he had never seen his deceased father (although it was later claimed that he had done so earlier in 1883). He further revealed in 1898 that he had never seen Jesus nor heard his voice.

In 1890 after much pressure from the American government, who no longer even recognized the existence of the LDS Church, President Wilford Woodruff issued a press release we now call the Manifesto asking members to refrain from breaking the laws of the land in their marriages. To many members this seemed to be the end of Celestial

8 Revelation to John Taylor, 13 October 1882. Unpublished Revelations 83:1,4-5,15. This was published as a pamphlet by the Church, and in Swedish, German and Danish versions of the Doctrine and Covenants.

9 Life of Wilford Woodruff, Matthias F. Cowley, p. 542

10 Mormon Hierarchy: Extensions of Power (D. Michael Quinn), 13 October 1882, p. 780.

11 L. John Nuttall Journal, 5 October 1888.

12 Franics M. Lyman journal, 7 January 1882.

Plural Marriage, but others did not place the same importance on the law of the land or press releases, when compared to the laws of God. President Woodruff himself had prophesied two years earlier that the Saints wouldn't, "quit practicing Plural Marriage until Christ shall come,"[13] which Grant recorded in his journal at the time.

Eleven years after the Manifesto Lorenzo Snow encouraged Heber to secretly take another wife.[14] Accordingly he approached Fanny Woolley (the sister of John W. Woolley) that year and asked her to marry him. She, however, felt more impressed with Stake President George Parkinson (already a post-Manifesto polygamist), and became his plural wife a year later.[15] By 1903 a warrant was out for his arrest for continuing to live plural marriage, and he was given an assignment in England to enable him to flee the country. Before he did so, George F. Gibbs, the secretary to the First Presidency reiterated that he should try to take another wife whilst there, but there is no record but rumor that he ever did[16]

He did remain living with his existing plural wives however, and in 1899 even had to go to court and pay a fine for breaking the 'unlawful cohabitation' law against plural marriage.[17] But by 1908, with the death of his wife Emily, he found himself a monogamist again.

Following the death of Joseph F. Smith, on the 23rd of November 1918, Anthon H. Lund proposed Heber J. Grant as Church President, Grant then chose him as a counselor, then Lund set apart Grant. After which Lund was sustained President of the Council of Twelve.[18] Thus he became the first President of the Church who was monogamous during his presidency. In fact, he claimed at least twice in General Conference that "no man living [had] authority to solemnize plural marriage"[19] Where those keys went he did not say.

From having once been a supporter of the rights of polygamists, as Church President he seemed to see them as criminals that should be punished. In the April 1931[20] Conference, for example he promised to assist in prosecuting post-Manifesto polygamists, although as before noted, he himself tried to take a wife after the Manifesto and was prosecuted for continuing to live polygamously after that time.

A couple of years later, a "final Manifesto" which had been prepared by J. Reuben Clark and signed by Grant was read aloud in every congregation and seemed to once-and-for-all end any official approval or overlooking of plural marriage by Church leaders. The

13 Heber J. Grant Journal, 17 May 1888. See also John Henry Smith Journal
14 Heber J. Grant to Joseph F. Smith, 5 Jan. 1906, Grant Papers, LDS Church Archives; Grant, May-June 1901 Notebook, 26 May 1901.
15 See Matthias F. Cowley trial.
16 Heber J. Grant to Joseph F. Smith, 5 Jan. 1906
17 Salt Lake Tribune, 9 September 1899 (his last child was evidence).
18 See Dialogue, Vol.20, No.2, p.53
19 October 1926 & April 1921.
20 4 April 1933.

statement was full of many factual errors, however, as it stated that a revelation from John Taylor commanding the uninterrupted continuation of plural marriage was not in the Church archives and was unknown to President Grant (although he had been at at least two meetings where it had been discussed in decades previously,[21] and Joseph Fielding Smith Jr. had seen it in the archives himself before that time).[22] The statement also alleged that "celestial Marriage ... and plural marriage are not synonymous terms" which contradicted the teachings of all Church Presidents prior to Grant.[23]

President Grant's statements against that principle would also turn to actual persecution. In 1935 the Utah legislature made "unlawful cohabitation" a felony for the first time, punishable by up to 5 years in prison (even the anti-polygamous territorial law had made it only a misdemeanor). This law was drafted by Hugh B. Brown (LDS Stake President, and later an Apostle, undoubtedly with the approval of the Church.

In 1944 husbands were taken from their wives and children from their mothers without there ever being any evidence of abuse, but simply for the crime of believing and practicing what they believed to be celestial plural marriage. The world was shocked and horrified at the images of innocent children being torn from their loving families, and the actions were almost universally condemned – except by the Church and it's Deseret News which applauded the raids and court cases.[24]

In the middle of May 1945, some of those men who believed they were clinging to early Mormon doctrines, and whose families the Church had once encouraged in living their way life, were put in jail, and the last hope of Heber J. Grant was fulfilled in which he said, "I shall rejoice when the Government officials put a few of these [polygamists] in the county jail or the state penitentiary."[25] His joy though, was short lived, as he died the next day. His legacy being that he had ended his life fighting against the very thing which his father and others risked their lives to keep alive.

It is hard to imagine what could have prompted President Grant to change his views and attitudes so completely against the very principle he was born into, and which all Church Presidents before him had been persecuted because of. Perhaps a statement he made in 1938 may give some clue as to what swayed his mind. He stated in the November of

21 Heber J. Grant Journal, 30 September 1890; First Presidency Office Journal, 2 October 1889. Minutes of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles, 22 February & 1 March 1911 & 23 January 1914.

22 He copied it on 3 August 1909.

23 See D&C 132:3-4,6,21,27,32; Revelation to Wilford Woodruff, 26 January 1880, Unpublished Revelations 79:32; Revelations to John Taylor, 25 June 1882 & September 1886, Unpublished Revelations 80:21-22 & 8:7-8.

24 See Salt Lake Tribune, 8 March 1944.

25 27 November 1928, Letter to Joseph W. Musser (original in the possession of Ivan Neilson).

that year that he found his "greatest happiness" "in the good will and friendship" from "all classes of people" and denominations, instead of "persecution and bitterness."[26] To some this statement may seem harmless enough, but we see it in it's true light when we compare it to a warning given almost half a century earlier by Brigham Young - "When the spirit of persecution, the spirit of hatred, of wrath and malice ceases in the world against this people, it will be the time that this people have apostatized and joined hands with the wicked, and never until then; which I pray may never come."[27]

This change has since been praised by subsequent Church leaders such as Elder John J. Carmack, who related his happiness that, "During his tenure, President Heber J. Grant moved us into the modern era. We were no longer in isolation. We became a part of the world, the business community, the intellectual community. That was a major corner that we turned."[28] How quickly it seems that we have forgotten the words of Jesus that "friendship with the world is enmity with God."[29]

The approval and acceptance of the world is an intoxicating thing, and led not only to the Church giving up plural marriage but to many other principles and questionable actions. To give a few examples -

In 1921 Grant authorizes a change in Priesthood ordination, to remove the conferral of the Priesthood,[30] which directly conflicted with instructions given by his predecessor, Joseph F. Smith, given in 1901.[31]

This was not the only such change. Two years later, the garment was substantially changed,[32] in direct opposition to strict instructions President Smith have a only a few years earlier, that any such alterations would invalidate the garment completely.[33] According to one account, Heber Grant reasoned that, "The changes in the garment were neither by revelation nor inspiration, but to please the sisters, and encourage the young people to go through the Temple"[34] This was followed a few years later by several changes in the temple ceremony itself, and in the administration and meaning of the highest ordinance, the Second Anointing.[35]

Not content with altering the ordinances of the temple, in 1923 President Grant mortgaged the temple and put in the hands of the world in order to support a sugar business! To take out a $30 million loan (for

26 Salt Lake Tribune, 22 Nov 1938. See also Conference Report, Apr. 4, 1920, p. 12.
27 Brigham Young - J.D. 4:327, see 10:273.
28 Elder John J. Carmack, Church News, Jan. 13, 1990.
29 James 4:4
30 23 April 1921. This is changed back 36 years later.
31 Improvement Era 4:394
32 14 June 1923.
33 Improvement Era 9, June 1916: 812.
34 See "Read it and weep" tape/pamphlet, Salt Lake Tribune, 4 June 1923 & George F. Richards & others to the First Pres. and Twelve, 22 Apr. 1936.
35 See David John Buerger, Mysteries of Godliness, p. 157 & 164

fifty years) he used Temple Square as collateral.[36]

Brother Heber also taught a new doctrine, that we should follow Church leaders even if they may be wrong, and we will still be blessed for it. Even though he himself had once taught that "Next to the committing of sin, there is no more fruitful cause of apostasy among the Latter-day Saints than when we put our trust in the arm of flesh."[37] Yet he told a young Marion G. Romney that, "My boy, you always keep your eye on the President of the Church, and if he ever tells you to do anything, and it is wrong, and you do it, the Lord will bless you for it."[38]

It seems that more changes in the Church occurred during his tenure, than any other Church President, nearly all of them to remove by policy what previous prophets had established by revelation. This biography may seem overly negative about Heber J. Grant, but it has been written to show that whatever qualifications he had as a businessman, that as a Prophet he has been found wanting. Yet if we are to look for the true successor of Joseph F. Smith, one who stood against the world and stood up for true principles despite persecution then we need to look elsewhere.

Nevertheless, we must remember that the Lord must have called Heber J. Grant for a reason. There are many good things he did during his administration, such as the welfare program, and of course the Church members generally also bear some responsibility for the course the Church took at the time, as so many wanted the changes that occurred, and President Grant to some extent was acting on their behalf. There are many statements he made as an Apostle that we would do well to follow (and we can only wish he had followed himself):

> "No matter what restrictions we may be placed under by men, our only consistent course is to keep the commandments for God. We should, in this regard, place ourselves in the same position as that of the three Hebrews who were cast into the fiery furnace. ... we have but one choice, that is to abide in the law of God, no matter as to the consequence."[39]

36 Salt Lake County Recorder's Office, Deed No. 501, 787, Bk. 11 U, page 440, dated Nov. 19, 1923, and recorded Nov. 21, 1923. Issued by Heber J. Grant, Trustee in Trust for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Two other deeds followed: #501,790 and #502,184 also issued by Heber J. Grant. Despite this legal documentation, President Grant publicly denied it had occurred – Deseret News, 4 April 1936.

37 Heber J. Grant, Gospel Standards, p. 31.

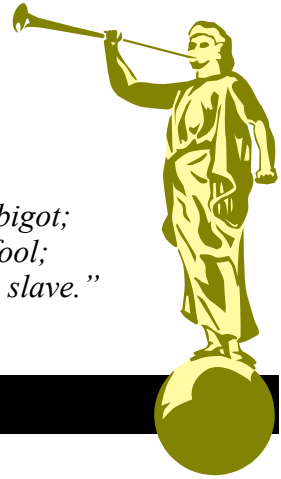
38 Conference Report, October 1960, p. 78.

39 Heber J. Grant, Deseret News, Apr. 6, 1885.

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel

"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."



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Issue 6, Jan - May 2005

Editorial

Since our last issue, Brother Owen Allred, one of our supporters and an occasional contributor passed away at the age of 91. He was the son of Byron Harvey Allred, Jr., the author of "Leaf in Review." He was called to Joseph W. Musser's Priesthood Council in 1952, and in 1977, following the death of his brother, Rulon Allred, he became his successor, and was considered by thousands to be a prophet of the Lord. His inspiration, humor, and friendship will be missed. Our regards go to his family.

This issue completes the first American volume of Messenger magazine. 2004 was the first year in it's 14 year history (1991-2005) it was printed outside England, and the first in which it was published bi-monthly.

A Proclamation on the Economy

A pamphlet issued by the
First Presidency and Quorum of Twelve[1]
10th July 1875

To The Latter-day Saints -

The experience of mankind has shown that **the people of communities and nations among whom wealth is the most equally distributed, enjoy the largest degree of liberty, are the least exposed to tyranny and oppression and suffer the least from luxurious habits which beget vice**. Among the chosen people of the Lord, to prevent the too rapid growth of wealth and its accumulation in a few hands, he ordained that in every seventh year the debtors were to be released from their debts, and, where a man had sold himself to his brother, he was in that year to be released from slavery and to go free; even the land itself which might pass out of the possession of its owner by his sale of it, whether through his improvidence, mismanagement, or misfortune, could only be alienated until the year of jubilee. At the expiration of every forty-nine years the land reverted, without cost, to the man or family whose inheritance originally it was, except in the case of a dwelling house in a walled city, for the redemption of which, one year only was allowed, after which, if not redeemed, it became the property, without change at the year of jubilee, of the purchaser. Under such a system, carefully maintained, there could be no great aggregations of either real or personal property in the hands of a few; especially so while the laws, forbidding the taking of usury or interest for money or property loaned, continued in force.

One of the great evils with which our own nation is menaced at the present time is the wonderful growth of wealth in the hands of a comparatively few individuals. **The very liberties for which our fathers contended so steadfastly and courageously, and which they bequeathed to us as a priceless legacy, are endangered by the monstrous power which this accumulation of wealth gives to a few individuals and a few powerful corporations**. By its seductive influence results are accomplished which, were it more equally distributed, would be impossible under our form of government. It threatens to give shape to the legislation, both State and National, of the entire country. If this evil should not be checked, and measures not be taken to prevent the continued enormous growth of riches among the class already rich, and the painful increase of destitution and want

1 The original title was, “Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution.” See Messages of the First Presidency 2:267.

among the poor, the nation is liable to be overtaken by disaster; for, according to history, such a tendency among nations once powerful was the sure precursor of ruin. The evidence of the restiveness of the people under this condition of affairs in our times is witnessed in the formation of societies of grangers, of patrons of husbandry, trades' unions, etc., etc., combinations of the productive and working classes against capital.

Years ago it was perceived that we Latter-day Saints were open to the same dangers as those which beset the rest of the world. A condition of affairs existed among us which was favorable to the growth of riches in the hands of a few at the expense of the many. A wealthy class was being rapidly formed in our midst whose interests, in the course of time, were likely to be diverse from those of the rest of the community. The growth of such a class was dangerous to our union; and, of all people, we stand most in need of union and to have our interests identical. Then it was that the Saints were counseled to enter into cooperation. In the absence of the necessary faith to enter upon a more perfect order revealed by the Lord unto the church, this was felt to be the best means of drawing us together and making us one. ...

To-day, therefore, **cooperation among us is no untried experiment. It has been tested, and whenever fairly tested, and under proper management, its results have been most gratifying and fully equal to all that was expected of it**, though many attempts have been made to disparage and decry it, to destroy the confidence of the people in it and to have it prove a failure. ...

A union of interests was sought to be attained. At the time co-operation was entered upon the Latter-day Saints were acting in utter disregard of the principles of self-preservation. They were encouraging the growth of evils in their own midst which they condemned as the worst features of the systems from which they had been gathered. Large profits were being concentrated in comparatively few hands, instead of being generally distributed among the people. As a consequence, the community was being rapidly divided into classes, and the hateful and unhappy distinctions which the possession and lack of wealth give rise to, were becoming painfully apparent. ...

Co-operation has submitted in silence to a great many attacks. Its friends have been content to let it endure the ordeal. But it is now time to speak. The Latter-day Saints should understand that it is our duty to sustain cooperation and to do all in our power to make it a success. ...

Does not all our history impress upon us the great truth that in union is strength? Without it, what power would the Latter-day Saints have? But it is not in doctrines alone that we should be united, but in practice and especially in our business affairs.

Your Brethren,

Brigham Young

Charles C. Rich
George A. Smith
Lorenzo Snow
Daniel H. Wells
Erastus Snow
John Taylor
Franklin D. Richards

Wilford Woodruff
George Q. Cannon
Orson Hyde
Brigham Young, Jr.
Orson Pratt
Albert Carrington

The Camel and the Eye of the Needle

"In Jerusalem there is a gate called 'the eye of the needle' through which a camel could not pass until it stooped down to make it through the entrance." This story has been taught to children in Sunday schools and by parents for at least two hundred years.[1] It teaches about the need to bow or kneel before God in order to take the path back to his presence.

In some other versions of this tale the gate is only narrow, and the camel must remove its baggage to squeeze through. This conveys the need to rid ourselves of our earthly faults and sins in order to take the narrow path of the righteous. This is a lovely story, which ever way it is told, and it makes a wonderful parable, but with one little problem - it is not true! There never was an ancient gate by that name! It was invented by the 12th century.

"In ancient Israel there was a pass through the mountains that caravans going had to often pass through. It was known as 'the eye of the needle,' because it was overrun with robbers, and it was almost impossible to pass through without losing everything." This is another wonderful tale about the need to be cautious about our material goods, to remind us how they can be so easily lost, and how we can't take them to heaven with us. It also is historically false.

There are many other variations on this same theme - involving an entrances to an inn (where the entrances we narrow to thwart fat camel-riding robbers), or a giant mysterious needle shape in the desert. It indeed seems very popular in Christian circles to make up, or repeat stories involving camels squeezing through narrow places.

Where have such ideas come from, and why have so many Christians been so keen to believe them? There can be few students of the scriptures who have never heard the statement of Jesus to his disciples that "it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."[2] It is one of the very few passages rendered exactly the same in several gospels - Matthew, Mark and Luke render it exactly the same, without variation. It undoubtedly must have been very clearly impressed upon their minds, and they were very particular about accurately rendering it.

Yet even for those who don't believe in dubious camel stories the translation of this passage is sometimes disputed. Amongst amateur scholars there a several different explanations of what is meant by the words 'camel' and 'needle.'

Some have proposed that the original Greek word we have translated "camel" (kamelos) was actually "rope" (kamilos) in the

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1 It was popularized in books such as the "Companion Bible," by E.W. Bullinger, or "the Manners and Customs of the Bible" by James Freeman.

2 Matt 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25

original language. The idea is that a rope may have been very difficult to thread into a rug knitting needle, but not impossible. It is an interesting theory, but it wasn't actually until around the 12th century - when the Catholic church started having a problem with this passage - that they changed their Greek manuscripts to reflect the word "rope" instead of the original word (from all early texts[3]) of "camel." If this was not enough to end such a theory, others have brought up that the Aramaic word "gamla"[4] could refer to a camel or perhaps a thick rope made from camel hair. The problem with this idea though is that the gospel were not written in Aramaic, and whilst the Apostles would have known and spoken Aramaic, what would the chances be of all three of the accounts of this passage being misrendered? As far as the idea of the needle being very large goes (whether a rug needle, or even a gate or a door), Luke's account leaves no room for this interpretation as he uses the word "belonh"[5] which means a small surgeons needle.

Some say that Jesus must have meant something else, because the idea of a camel passing through the eye of the needle is ridiculous and surreal. Yet Jesus also speaks symbolically of some people having a plank of wood (translated "beam" in the King James version) being in their eye[6], and of the Pharisees figuratively swallowing camels.[7]

Ancient texts cooberate that the phrase "easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle" is not only very old, but was familiar to his audience. In the Talmud for instance it teaches that not even in dreams could one "see a palm of gold or an elephant passing through an eye of a needle."[8]

The Koran also tells us that the impious (disrespectful and irreverent) "shall find the gates of heaven shut: nor shall he enter there till a camel shall pass through the eye of a needle."[9]

What did Jesus really mean?

This may seem a revolutionary conclusion to some, but perhaps the verse actually means what it says! Maybe there actually is more chance of a camel going through the eye of a needle than a rich man entering the kingdom of heaven!

This is a hard concept for us in our relatively wealthy society to

3 See Sinaiticus, Vaticanus & Washington Freer - 4th century, Ephraemi, Bezae Cantabrigiensis & Dublinensis - 5th century & Regius - 8th century.
4 This theory comes from G M Lamsa, whose theory that the original gospels were written in Aramaic has not been given much credence by serious biblical scholars.
5 Luke 18:25.
6 Matthew 7:3.
7 Matthew 23:24.
8 Babylonian Talmud, Berakoth, 55b & Baba Mezi'a, 38b.
9 Surat vii. ver. 37.

understand or accept. Many of us may have seen wealth as a sign of God's blessings, and as a reward for righteousness. Indeed there are a few examples of godly men in the Bible who had obtained some degree of riches, such as Abraham.[10] Yet the Savior referred to Abraham being in heaven,[11] how is this possible?

Jesus answered this question straight afterwards to the confused Apostles who did not know how to interpret his words either. Said he, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."[12]

It being possible, even with God's help, does not mean it will be easy however. Jesus made it clear when he began his analogy that "a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven."[13] This is because "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required."[14]

Riches come with greater responsibility, and the greater the obligations we have to God, his kingdom and our fellow men. The larger the condemnation will be from God and judgments against us by Him if we do not fulfill them. Therefore a rich man is in a precarious position, and faces unique temptations and diversions. In a future day of reckoning God will be his accountant, He will call into question his expenses and extravagances, and undoubtedly no penny wasted or horded will go unnoticed. At that day his money will not buy him or any of us entrance into heaven.[15]

NOTES

There is an interesting story from the apocryphal Acts of Peter and Andrew on this subject:

> 13 There was a rich man named Onesiphorus who said: "If I believe, shall I be able to do wonders?" Andrew said: "Yes, if you forsake your wife and all your possessions." He was angry and put his garment about Andrew's neck and began to beat him, saying: "You are a wizard, why should I do so?"
>
> 14 Peter saw it and told him to leave off. He said: "I see you are wiser than he. What do you say?" Peter said: "I tell you this: it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Onesiphorus was yet more angry and took his garment off Andrew's neck and cast it on Peter's and haled him along, saying: "You are worse than the

10 Genesis 13:2. Isaac was wealthy too – 26:12-13.
11 See Luke 16:22-25.
12 Matthew 19:26.
13 Matthew 19:23.
14 Luke 12:48. Note: John F. Kennedy famously paraphrased this "For of those to whom much is given, much is required."
15 "Riches profit not in the day of wrath:" Proverbs 11:4.

other. If you show me this sign, I and the whole city will believe but if not you shall be punished."

15 Peter was troubled and stood and prayed: "Lord, help us at this hour, for thou hast entrapped us by thy words."

16 The Saviour ... said; "Fear not: let the needle and the camel be brought." There was a huckster in the town who had been converted by Philip; and he heard of it, and looked for a needle with a large eye, but Peter said: "Nothing is impossible with God rather bring a needle with a small eye."

17 When it was brought, Peter saw a camel coming and stuck the needle in the ground and cried: "In the name of Jesus Christ crucified under Pontius Pilate I command thee, camel, to go through the eye of the needle." The eye opened like a gate and the camel passed through; and yet again, at Peter's bidding.

18 Onesiphorus said: "You are a great sorcerer: but I shall not believe unless I may send for a needle and a camel." And he said secretly to a servant: "Bring a camel and a needle, and find a defiled woman and some swine's flesh and bring them too." And Peter heard it in the spirit and said: "O slow to believe, bring your camel and woman and needle and flesh."

19 When they were brought Peter stuck the needle in the ground, with the flesh, the woman was on the camel. He commanded it as before, and the camel went through, and back again.

20 Onesiphorus cried out, convinced and said: "Listen. I have lands and vineyards and 27 litrae of gold and 50 of silver, and many slaves: I will give my goods to the poor and free my slaves if I may do a wonders like you." Peter said: "If you believe, you shall."

21 Yet he was afraid he might not be able, because he was not baptized, but a voice came: "Let him do what he will." So Onesiphorus stood before the needle and camel and commanded it to go through and it went as far as the neck and stopped. And he asked why. "Because you are not yet baptized." He was content, and the apostles went to his house, and 1,000 souls were baptized that night.[16]

16 The Apocryphal New Testament, M R James, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924, p459.

Economic Freedom

Communism and Capitalism compared[1]

Joseph W. Musser

Truth[2] holds no brief with any sort of "ism" that has for its aim the destruction of human liberty. Men who engage in movements which encourage religious intolerance, are actuated by the spirit of the evil one, whether they be churchmen or otherwise. The Gospel plan is based upon the "Free agency of man." Men are at liberty to worship God as they choose, or not to worship Him at all, so long as they do not infringe on the liberties or rights of others. This is true also as pertaining to our government. We are guaranteed certain inalienable rights under the Constitution of the United States, and any movement tending to proscribe or deny such rights is anti-Christ and should be resisted in all proper ways.

And so with the Constitution. Any attempt to destroy it, or to change its clear meaning and intent, except through the orderly channel provided by the Constitution itself for amending the document, should be vigorously opposed. The Church is right in its advocacy of preserving this great human rights document. It is the foundation of American institutions and our government, at least in theory, is the best government now on the earth and of which we are familiar.

However, we must not loose sight of the fact that agencies other than Communism are gnawing at the vitals of our body politic today. Among these sinister forces is unrestrained and unregulated Capitalism – the direct antithesis of Communism. It is held by many, and with good reason, that Communism is a by-product of Capitalism, and is a force organized to resist the baneful effects of Capitalism. Communism, Fascism, Socialism, etc., as we view it, are the direct off-shoots of Capitalism and are organized to protect society therefrom. **Capitalism is near kin to Imperialism, which is the direct opposite of Democracy, the principle of the American government** ... it will be difficult to convince a large number of the Saints that Communism is more destructive of free government than is the Capitalism as we know it today.

The Lord said, "It is not given that one man should possess that which is above another, wherefore (because of the destructive forces of Capitalism) the world lieth in sin."[3] For, said the Savior further, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."[4]

So far as the Saints are concerned, there should be no partisan

1 This is not the original title, but a summary of this section of his editorial.

2 Here he is speaking specifically of "Truth" magazine, but undoubtedly also of Truth as a principle.

3 D&C 49:20.

4 Matthew 19:24; Mark 10:25; Luke 18:25.

Communists, Socialists, Republicans, Democrats, German, French, Danish or what-nots. A true Latter-day Saint is non-partisan; he works solely for the building up of God's kingdom on earth. There can be no place in his religion for any sort of an "ism" that tends to divide or to subjugate. "If ye are not one ye are not mine,"[5] is a measuring stick the Saints should abide by. "Honest men, and wise men should be sought for, diligently, and good men and wise men ye should observe to uphold; otherwise whatsoever is less than these cometh of evil."[6] Selfish partisanship measures men only by their party standards, the men themselves and their principles being secondary. ...

Our advice to all Latter-day Saints is to refrain from upholding any and all doctrines not in accord with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Let the Saints gird themselves with the girdle of righteousness and **cease mingling with and doing business in the ways of Babylon**. Let them seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, that all necessary things may be added unto them. ...

Economic freedom can never come to this land of Joseph except through the law upon which such freedom is based. With all the efforts being made to overcome the depression, there can be no substantial progress made until the people accept God's law pertaining to economic equality; the present relief problems that are troubling the communities of Latter-day Saints, can only be solved in this way. Any other method will at best, bring but temporary benefits, resulting in conditions far more serious than they now are.

Truth magazine, 1st August 1936, Volume 2, No. 3, p. 37

5 D&C 38:27.
6 D&C 98:10.

Seeking Riches vs. The Scriptures

Our God is a giver of wonderful gifts. He gives us our bodies, the life within them, and the earth on which we dwell. He gives us the plants, trees and animals for food, and the materials to shelter and clothe ourselves. Most of us are stewards over a few of these things, and to a few he gives an abundance of these material blessings.

The scriptures indeed teach that God also made "the rich"[1] as well as the poor, and Solomon displays his wisdom in the book of Ecclesiastes, when he acknowledges that God also blessed "Every man also to whom [He] hath given riches and wealth."[2]

But this does not mean, however, that every one who is rich has been blessed by God or that God approves of everyones riches. In fact the scriptures on many occasions warn of the dangers that can come with wealth.

Those who do not lack any material need often find it easier to "glory in [their] riches"[3] rather than God, they are more likely to be susceptible to "the deceitfulness"[4] that comes with wealth or is often the way by which it is obtained, or can become consumed with the "pride of their hearts"[5] and "choked with cares ... and pleasures of this life"[6] which will "canker [their] souls,"[7] and lead to them "oppressing ... the poor."[8] All of these can eventually cause them to "fall"[9] from God's grace, and their place in the heavens.

Where such warnings are unheeded it is because they do not follow the counsel of the Lord that, "if riches increase, set not your heart upon them."[10] "For where your treasure is," Jesus tells us "there will be your heart also."[11]

Although riches can in some cases come from being blessed by God, the scriptures speak of many things considered better than riches. The most obvious of these is "righteousness."[12] We have already mentioned wisdom, which those who obtain it consider it their "crown of ... riches."[13] "A good name," is also "rather to be chosen than great

1 D&C 38:16.
2 Ecclesiastes 5:19.
3 Jeremiah 9:23.
4 Matthew 13:22.
5 Helaman 4:12. See Alma 4:6; 45:24; Hel 3:36; 7:26; 3 Ne 6:10.
6 Luke 8:14.
7 D&C 56:16.
8 Proverbs 22:16; James 2:6.
9 Proverbs 11:28; Romans 11:12.
10 Psalms 62:10. See Mosiah 12:29; Alma 1:30, 5:53, 7:6; Helaman 7:21.
11 Matthew 6:21.
12 Psalms 37:6 (spoken of as "uprightness")
13 Proverbs 14:24.

riches."[14] Even "reproach" (scorn) for the sake "of Christ" is truly "greater riches"[15] than earthly wealth.

Yet in the scriptures we find a few examples of men who seemed to be both righteous and rich. Solomon, for example "exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches,"[16] yet for a while was a wise and righteous ruler.

Why did God give Solomon so much? When God had appointed him king Solomon "asked wisdom and knowledge" so that he might fairly judge God's people, and the Lord blessed him, telling him, "Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honor, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; ... wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honor."[17]

There is a saying that those who seek for power are the least qualified to receive it, the least able to handle it, the most likely to misuse and abuse it. Perhaps this is the problem with wealth too. In Solomon's case God told him that it was precisely because he didn't seek for riches that God gave them to him. Solomon himself recounted that he preferred the wisdom God had given him "before sceptres and thrones, and esteemed riches nothing in comparison."[18]

But God doesn't just reward those who don't seek for wealth – because they have other aims or specific responsibilities – but he expects all of us to follow Solomon's wise example, and condemns very clearly in the scriptures those who don't.

Just as Alma told the Saints of his time "Seek not after riches nor the vain things of this world,"[19] so too has the Lord told us through the Prophet Joseph Smith to "Seek not for riches but for wisdom."[20] The desire for wealth comes not from God, but from a more malevolent source: "Satan," who has "great power, unto the stirring up of the people to ... seek for power, and authority, and riches, and the vain things of the world."[21]

Nevertheless, some wealth comes neither by unrighteous means or by the miraculous intervention of God, but simply by the exercise of hard work, as the Lord promises, "he that gathereth by labour shall increase."[22] Yet God has been very clear in telling his people in no uncertain terms that they should not work with the intent of being rich.

"Labour not to be rich,"[23] the Lord inspired Solomon to say in the

14 Proverbs 22:1.
15 Hebrews 11:26.
16 1 Kings 10:23.
17 2 Chronicles 1:11-12.
18 Wisdom of Solomon 7:8, Apocrypha, King James Version.
19 Alma 39:14.
20 D&C 6:7.
21 3 Nephi 6:15.
22 Proverbs 13:11.
23 Proverbs 23:4.

book of Proverbs, and who could understand this subject better than the richest man who ever lived? This is because wealth can be an illusion, "we set our eyes upon that which is not,"[24] and we may end up believing that the more we have the more secure or happy we will be. But God tells us to "flee these things,"[25] because those who seek for riches "fall into temptation and a snare ... which drown men in destruction and perdition."[26]

Some believe they would serve God better with wealth, but as Jesus pointed out "no man can serve ... God and [riches]."[27] Our Heavenly Father has a different plan for his servants, one which allows no compromise, for "the laborer in Zion shall labor for Zion; for if they labor for money they shall perish."[28]

We should be satisfied with the necessities of life and not "spend money for that which is of no worth"[29] For the Apostle Paul counsels us that "having food and raiment" we should "be therewith content."[30] In fact the response of a wise man or woman would be, "give me neither poverty or riches."[31] For our focus should be on serving God. If it is - a far greater heavenly reward awaits us than we could every achieve on earth, for "then you shall be made rich," for "he that hath eternal life is rich."[32]

24 Proverbs 23:5.
25 1 Timothy 6:11.
26 1 Timothy 6:9.
27 "Mammon," from the Greek "mamonas" or the Aramaic "mamona" is literally translated "riches."
28 2 Ne 26:31.
29 2 Nephi 9:51, See Isaiah 55:2.
30 1 Timothy 6:8.
31 Proverbs 30:8.
32 D&C 6:7; 11:7.

Some Thoughts on Jacob 2:19

> "And after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches, if ye seek them; and ye will seek them for the intent to do good — to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted."

If we were just to read verse 19, especially the first part, by itself, without the verses around it - "after ye have obtained a hope in Christ ye shall obtain riches" - we might conclude that placing our hopes in Jesus might inevitably lead to earthly wealth. Also, if we were to take the part of the sentence "ye will seek them (riches) for the intent to do good," we could come to the conclusion that God wants us to seek riches, for doesn't he say "ye will," and couldn't this be seen as a command?

This is indeed the interpretation of some Latter-day Saints. A few of whom go as far as believing that if we do not seek for riches we either lack "hope in Christ" or the "intent to do good." It is an interesting theory, and surely no good person would wish to dash anyone elses "hope" or "good intent," yet there is one problem with their interpretation of this scripture – it is completely wrong!

To summarize the problems with this view: Such an interpretation contradicts every other statement the Lord has made on the subject, many of which are from the Book of Mormon. It also raises two pertinent questions: What constitutes "obtaining a hope in Christ?" and in what sense might a person "seek ... riches" other than personal monetary and material wealth?

The Lord specifically forbids seeking for riches several times in ancient and modern scriptures, and indirectly in many more passages. This condemnation is not limited to the unrighteous or just to Gentiles. Whilst the poor are given consolation by the Lord, the rich are nearly always warned because of the problems so often associated with wealth.[33]

If we begin by analyzing the words Jacob uses and compare them to other passages of scripture that use similar phrases or ideas then perhaps we can begin to better understand what the author originally meant.

Let us take the concept of obtaining a "hope in Christ" for instance. From a casual reading of this we might just assume it is speaking of everyone who places some degree of hope in Jesus. But it does not speak of just placing or trying to exercise a hope, but of having obtained such a hope.

What is the difference? The Apostle Paul tells us that merely

33 See the LDS edition of the Bible, Topical Guide, under the subjects – Poor & Riches.

having a "hope in Christ" still leaves us "most miserable."[34] It seems then that having such a hope in our heart we are still far from God's approval, and if so "miserable" then it is hard to understand why He would wish to shower us with riches if we are only at such a stage.

Jacob uses the idea of obtaining "hope" elsewhere in his record though, and in a different way than which Paul had used it. He tells us that after having "many revelations and the spirit of prophecy ... we obtain a hope, and our faith becometh unshaken."[35] He is speaking of being able to "obtain a hope" or perhaps we might say 'fulfilling' our hope in Christ.

How many have reached such a stage? Jacob also gives us a measure by which to judge when someone has reached this point, for when they have they "truly can command in the name of Jesus and the very trees obey us, or the mountains, or the waves of the sea."[36]

Alma also tells us that what someone has come this far "according to the promises of the Lord, ['they know'] that they are raised to dwell at the right hand of God, in a state of never-ending happiness." Few Saints ever reach this point, which is sometimes called "having your calling and election made sure."[37] Yet until they do they are not guaranteed to "obtain riches" if they wish to seek them, and they are condemned in no uncertain terms for trying to seek them otherwise.[38]

What is also interesting is that the person who would seek riches at that point would not be seeking them for himself in any way, but rather "for the kingdom of God"[39] and "for the intent to do good — to clothe the naked, and to feed the hungry, and to liberate the captive, and administer relief to the sick and the afflicted."[40]

There is no mention of them keeping back any for themselves. We know from the example of Ananias and Sapphira in the book of Acts – who kept back "part of the price" of that which they were meant to have consecrated – that such things lead to spiritual death (and in their case physical death).[41]

This is why Jacob commanded the people to "be familiar with all and free with your substance, that [the poor] may be rich like unto you."[42] That is the purpose of the law of consecration, which we covenant to obey in the temple.[43] Yet the people who had been blessed with riches, instead became proud in their hearts.[44]

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34 1 Corinthians 15:19.
35 Jacob 4:6.
36 Ibid.
37 See 2 Peter 1:10.
38 Proverbs 28:20,22; Alma 39:14; D&C 6:7; 11:7.
39 Jacob 2:18.
40 Jacob 2:19.
41 Act 5:1-10.
42 Jacob 2:17.
43 See D&C 42:31.
44 Jacob 2:13.

Before we are so eager to seek after "treasures upon earth,"[45] perhaps we should consider laying up "treasures in heaven,"[46] by serving God, His Priesthood, and our families. As well as by working hard and improving our talents, and leaving it up to the Lord whether he wants to bless us (and try us) with riches. Let us be satisfied with whatever he considers it wise to give us, and to be faithful stewards over all things he places into our hands. Perhaps then we will prove ourselves worthy of more, and will know how to handle it.

Wisdom From the Book of Sirach[47] on the Subject of Riches

11:21 Marvel not at the works of sinners; but trust in the Lord, and abide in thy labour: for it is an easy thing in the sight of the Lord on the sudden to make a poor man rich.

13:19 As the wild ass is the lion's prey in the wilderness: so the rich eat up the poor.

v20 As the proud hate humility: so doth the rich abhor the poor.

v24 Riches are good unto him that hath no sin, and poverty is evil in the mouth of the ungodly.

31:1 Watching for riches consumeth the flesh, and the care thereof driveth away sleep.

v8 Blessed is the rich that is found without blemish, and hath not gone after gold.

45 Matthew 6:19.
46 Matthew 6:20.
47 King James Version of the Apocrypha.

Men and Money

Elder Charles W. Nibley[1]
Lecture in the Logan Temple
January 1886

The subject of political economy has engaged the attention of many of the most eminent thinkers and writers, from the days of the philosopher, Aristotle, down to the present; and during all the ages of the past, many a system has been formulated by the best minds, put on paper, appearing quite beautiful in theory, but in practice all resulting in failure.

The English word economy is derived from the Greek, the primary meaning of which is a house and a law; especially pertaining to the income of the household and the disbursement thereof. To the word economy is added the word political, which enlarges the meaning to embrace a community – a body politic — a nation, or the whole world. **Any system of political economy which allows the wealth of a country to be controlled and gathered in by a few, and thereby gives them power to oppress their fellows, must be a wrong system.** The true system would be, that which will give society the most strength to perpetuate itself in contentment and peace.

It would take too much time to even give you the names of all those who have written on this subject, much less a synopsis of their theories, but among the most prominent that the last two hundred years have produced are Adam Smith, Malthus, John Stuart Mill and Henry George. Others, who are far greater as thinkers and writers, like Herbert Spencer, Carlyle and Ruskin, have very clearly pointed out to us wherein **our present systems of supply and demand, competition, usury, rent and the like, are unjust, and, therefore wrong**, but have failed to clearly define some line of practice that would remedy the great evils under which the whole world groans and suffers.

Perhaps the most prominent truth which Adam Smith points out in his heavy volumes is this, "That all wealth is the result of labor." Labor alone produces wealth. This I think will be admitted without question; but for the most part of Smith's theories, new conditions of society have arisen, which he never dreamed of, and which, as was to be expected, have upset many of his propositions. For who could anticipate the results and developments wrought out by the coal and iron, the railroad and the steamer, and the telegraph with its ocean cables? Who could have conceived the industrial changes, the spinning mule and the power loom, the mower and self-binder, and the thousand and one labor-saving machines of recent invention would produce?

1 He was born 1849 in Scotland, and was later married polygamously. In 1907 was called as Presiding Bishop, and was the father of Preston Nibley, and grandfather of High Nibley. He died in 1931.

The doctrine of Malthus, or the "Malthusian theory," as it is called, has given rise to endless, foolish speculation. Malthus declares that population has a tendency to increase faster than subsistence; that, in fact, we must put some positive or preventive check to this multiplying of our species, or the food supply will not be equal to feed our members. On the other hand, Henry George and others take the opposite view, and say in effect, since labor produces wealth, the greater number of people you have on the earth who will labor, the more food and wealth they will produce.

It is true of political economy as it is of religions, all systems have some fraction of truth, otherwise they would not hang together at all; but to say that any of these theorists have formulated, or can formulate, a complete science which will fit and govern all the relations of human life and regulate with justice, all affairs between man and man, is to expect something which has not been, and never will be, realized. For it is true as the Scripture has said: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," and without the guidance of the Almighty, and the restraining influences which true religion brings, the world can never have a complete and successful system of political economy. No one who has eyes to see, will say that the wealth of the world is justly distributed.

In a country where one man can, from very small beginnings, clear over a million dollars every year for twenty or thirty years, like Governor Stanford of California, and where another man, nay, thousands of men, are unable to earn bread sufficient for themselves and their families to live on; where under the very shadow of the gilded palaces in our great cities, live thousands of miserable human beings – of our own flesh and blood every one of them – eking out an almost intolerable existence, and they cannot sell their labor for sufficient to buy them food and warmth. In the great city of Chicago, where is at present stored some seventeen million bushels of wheat, there are half-clad, barefooted children by the hundreds begging for bread-famishing for even the bare necessities of life. I say where such a state of society exists something is radically wrong and needs changing, or it will change itself in a manner not pleasant to behold, nor very healthy to the capitalist.

Such a state of affairs was never intended by the beneficent Father of us all; for are we not all his children, of one family, one flesh and blood? In the revelations to his Church in our day he has said: "For what man among you having twelve sons, and is no respector of them, and they serve him obediently, and he saith unto the one, be thou clothed in robes and sit thou here; and to the other, be thou clothed in rags and sit thou there; and looked upon his sons and saith I am just. Behold, I have given unto you a parable, and it is even as I am."[2]

It is even as I am! God is no respector of persons, and requires only that his children serve him obediently. To one he has given much

2 D. & C. 38: 26-27.

intelligence in certain things, to another he has given but little; yet when these two serve him obediently, with the full exercise of every faculty that each one has – then have they served him equally, and are equally acceptable before him.

And now when we see such wealth on the one hand, and destitution and want on the other, we naturally ask, why such poverty amidst such abundance? Certainly something is wrong; not one thing but many; and being wrong they will have to be set right. But where's the remedy? – there's the rub! ...

But with the strong, healthy, young person – the young society like ours – if we can only have pointed out certain rules of life, certain laws of God (and these latter will always be found to be laws of nature and this universe) and will live according to them, we will then have discovered a system of political economy, which will evolve anew society and do away with wretchedness and want, and the cry of the hungry shall be heard in the land no more forever. "For behold, the beasts of the field, and the fowls of the air, and that which cometh of the earth is ordained for the use of man, for food and for raiment, and that he might have in abundance; but it is not given that one man should possess that which is above another; wherefore the whole world lieth in sin."[3]

Perhaps the most important, and I may say the ground work of any system of political economy, is the question of land; and we will first proceed with the consideration of that subject, and in other lectures we will treat on competition, labor and capital, and kindred subjects. To whom does the land belong? This is a most important question. If we can determine that according to the laws of justice and equity, and arrange our ownership agreeable thereto, we will have taken a long stride in the right direction, and many of the evils which afflict society at present will be permanently cured. To whom should the land belong?

I make the assertion, and I do not think it can be gainsaid, that **every son and daughter of God born on this planet, has an equal right to the land**. He has that right by virtue of his birth on this planet, as much as he has equal rights in the air, the water, or the sunshine. For God, his Father, has created or organized all these for his children, and it is not given that "one man should possess that which is above another."[4] It would seem, therefore, if we are to have justice done, that private ownership in land would have to be abolished.

Let us for a few minutes look into what Henry George has to say in his excellent book entitled "Progress and Poverty,"[5] regarding the injustice of our present land-owning system:

3 D&C 49:19, 20.
4 D&C 49:20
5 The entire book is freely available online at http://www.henrygeorge.org/pplink.htm

"If we are all here by the equal permission of the Creator, we are all here with an equal title to enjoy his bounty – with an equal right to the use of all that nature so impartially offers. This is a right which is natural and inalienable; it is a right which vests in every human being, and which, during his continuance in the world, can be limited only by the equal rights of others. There is in nature no such thing as a fee simple in land. There is on earth no power which can rightfully make a grant of exclusive ownership in land.

If all existing men were to unite to grant away their equal rights, they could not grant away the right of those who follow them. For what are we but tenants for a day? Have we made the earth, that we should determine the rights of those who after us shall tenant it in their turn? The Almighty, who created the earth for man and man for the earth, has entailed it upon all the generations of the children of men by a decree written upon the constitution of all things – a decree which no human action can bar and no prescription determine. Let the parchments be ever so many or possession ever so long, natural justice can recognize no right in one man to the possession and enjoyment of land that is not equally the right of all his fellows....

The wide-spreading social evils which everywhere oppress men amid an advancing civilization, spring from a great primary wrong – the appropriation, as the exclusive property of some men, of the land on which and from which all must live. From this fundamental injustice flow all the injustices which distort and endanger modern development, which condemn the producer of wealth to poverty and pamper the non-producer in luxury, which rear the tenement house with the palace, plant the brothel behind the church, and compel us to build prisons as we open new schools. ...

Has the first comer at a banquet the right to turn back all the chairs and claim that none of the other guests shall partake of the food provided, except as they make terms with him? Does the first man who presents a ticket at the door of a theatre and passes in, acquire by his priority the right to shut the doors and have the performance go on for him alone? Does the first passenger who enters a railroad car obtain the right to scatter his baggage over all the seats and compel the passengers who come in after him to stand up? ...

Our boasted freedom necessarily involves slavery, so long as we recognize private property in land.[6] Until that is abolished, Declarations of Independence and Acts of Emancipation are in

6 "possession of land by people who do not use it is immoral - just like the possession of slaves." Leo Tolstoy.

vain. So long as one man can claim the exclusive ownership of the land from which other men must live, slavery will exist, and as material progress goes on, must grow and deepen."

But let us consider the injustice of the present system even in our own midst, without going out into the world for greater wrongs. Here, we will say is a brother who received the gospel years ago in his native land and soon "gathered" to Zion. By arriving here among the first settlers he is enabled to locate on a choice piece of land, say, near Salt Lake City. As population increases, his land grows in value. For his labor on the land he reaps, each year, an abundant harvest, and being close to the city finds a ready market for his produce.

These harvests are the result of his labor, but apart from any labor, that land which he located on and which cost him nothing, has grown to be worth from $100 to $300 per acre, simply because some twenty thousand people have built and are inhabiting a city adjacent to his land; and if another twenty or a hundred thousand people are added to that city, his land increases in value according to the increase in population. And all this increase of wealth comes without labor, for as I said he is more than paid for his labor by the abundant harvests. And now if some poor brother wishes to get an acre of said land to live on, he has to pay a yearly rent equal to a yearly interest on the market value of the land.

This brother who rents, first heard the gospel last year – rendered willing and prompt obedience to it – gathered with God's people and has in every way served our Father obediently, and yet because lie came in last year, and the other brother came some years sooner, the one has to pay to the other usury or rent for the privilege of living on the earth that his Father has created. Here are two sons then, who have served their Father obediently in all things, and it is practically said to the one, "be thou clothed in robes and sit thou here, and to the other, be thou clothed in rags and sit thou there."[7]

This is reversing the rule. It is not justice, and therefore cannot stand. For I can assure you, my friends, the just thing is the only permanent and lasting thing in this world. Were it not so, our case would indeed be a desperate one, contending as we are, a handful of people, against the unjust prejudices of the whole world. But we have supreme faith in the justice of our cause and we are very sure of victory. It is true God is on our side; but the reason he is there, is because our side has justice and truth to back it. God always has been and always will be on that side, adhering most rigidly to justice and truth. Therefore when we see anything in our system so manifestly unjust as is our private ownership of land, we may be very sure it cannot long stand.

It will all have to be changed to agree more nearly to the laws of equity, and that labor will devolve on the Latter-day Saints; for the

7 D&C 38:26.

young tree of Political Economy, in a young, healthy society like ours, can be made to grow according to laws of justice, but with the old tree which has so long grown in the world until it is now almost rotten to the core and is well nigh ready to be hewn down and cast into the fire – you cannot put new life into it by any system that can be devised; therefore, I say on the Latter-day Saints devolves the labor of correcting the evils and wrongs of society.

Among the tribes of Indians on this continent I never yet have learned where a single case of private ownership of land was tolerated; (except, perhaps, in the last few years when some few have adopted the white man's modes), even to this day they hold their reservation as the common property of the whole tribe. And also, among the Maoris – the natives of New Zealand – the same just rule obtains; for on one occasion the white settlers of that country found themselves unable to get from the Maoris what the latter considered a complete title to land, because although a whole tribe might have consented to the sale, they would still claim, with every new child born among them, an additional payment on the ground that they had only parted with their own rights and could not sell those of the unborn. The Government was obliged to step in and settle the matter by buying land for a tribal annuity, in which every child that is born acquires a share.

When the Lord, through Moses, led the children of Israel to the promised land, one of the first things done in arranging their excellent system of political economy was to regulate their land matters; and while each one was given his stewardship, yet the title to the land was really held by the tribe in common, and could never pass to an alien, nor indeed to a brother, except for a limited number of years.

As a people, we have much to congratulate ourselves on in our system, but I am free to say that not only our land matters, but also many other things pertaining to our political economy will have to be changed. How shall it be done? In regard to land first of all, I will say that it is my settled opinion, that the land will not be mine nor yours alone, but will be the common property of the whole people – will belong to the Church.

When the time comes (to use the words of revelation), "When my servant will appoint unto this people their portion, every man equal according to their families, according to their circumstances and their wants and needs. And let every man deal honestly and be alike among this people, and receive alike that you may be one even as I have commanded you."[8] "That you may be equal in the bands of heavenly things, yea and earthly things also, for the obtaining of heavenly things. For if ye are not equal in earthly things ye cannot be equal in obtaining heavenly things."[9]

8 D. & C. 51:3-9.
9 D. & C. 78:5, 6.

Now the equality here spoken of does not mean that each man should have an equal number of acres of land – equal house room and furnishings, – the same clothing, food, hours of sleep and the like with every other man – not that at all; for everything in nature indicates variety, change, no two things being exactly alike; and what might be a pleasing and suitable thing for you might be quite the reverse for me. It was never intended there should be such an equality – indeed there cannot be, for such a state of affairs would bring anything but happiness and contentment. But the equality referred to means the same equal right we have to the air we breathe, or the sunshine that gladdens and gives us all equal light and heat.

Pertaining to the laws of the church also, the same equality exists; as for instance the law of baptism, it is administered alike to each and all; no one can disregard it and be saved. In that we are equal. So also at the sacrament table there is the same equality; so with regard to tithing, – the settlement of our difficulties and indeed all the general laws of God apply with equal force and effect to every one of His children. But we are not to suppose that each one is endowed with the same talent or faculty, for we know such is not the case. To one is given much, to another little, and where much is given much will be required. One may be capable of wisely handling and directing the labor of others; and there have never yet been wanting laborers who are more than glad to labor and be directed by the wiser, if only they are treated as brothers and with that equality and justice that a righteous overseer would bestow.

It is plain, therefore, that **if the land were the property of the church, each member would be equal in ownership with every other member**, and the profits of it – over and above the cost of living comfortably, would pass into the general treasury, instead of into the hands of the few lucky ones who came first to the country and monopolized all the best land, to the exclusion of thousands just as willing and obedient Latter-day Saints as ever joined the church. Do not think now that I blame any one for taking up land and owning it, for under our present system there is no other way to do. Those who came first did exactly as we would have done had we been in their places; but I do say the whole is unjust and with all nations who adhere to it, will in the end bring revolution and ruin. It must be changed.

I am aware that some argue that in order to call forth a man's best energies, in directing or managing any temporal concern, he must have some other incentive than the general good of the whole; but I think on examination this idea will be found to be utterly groundless. For have we not all seen how thousands of our elders go forth and labor in the ministry for the good of the whole Church and the glory of God's cause! Indeed, such labor has been the most earnest and zealous and quite as hard as any labor that I know of. Nor is this because such labor is what we call of a spiritual nature, for there have been many elders engaged in

temporal duties, and are now, who work with as much devotion and solicitude for the success of their efforts as any individual enterprise could get out of them.

The true incentive for any man or woman to labor is, to know that it is one's duty, and in the doing of that duty the more who are benefited by it, the more pleasure will it bring to the true worker, and the more zealous and excellent will his labor be. With the land as the common property of the church, much of the inequality in temporal things, which at present exists, would be done away from among us, and we could receive of the fruits of the earth equally, according to our needs and our wants, so long as our wants were just. One other objection arises to this idea of common property of land, which I will briefly refer to and close. And that is the immense power it would give to the leaders of such a society, which would be dangerous if it were wielded unrighteously. Certainly such a system would place great power in some few hands, and I confess this is one of the chief reasons why I like it. I am for centralization of power in all things, when it can be centralized by the common consent of the whole people and administered with justice and judgment.

Our God is a most beneficent Father – desires to see His children equal as far as they can possibly be, but He is a terrible monopolist withal; He is aggressive and jealous of his power; indeed He wants it all – He and his – and is determined to have it, too, and will fight it out on that line until every opposing power is conquered and bound hand and feet. And yet He is so kind and just with his monopoly. We do not object to working for His cause for fear of giving him too much power. No! we want Him to have power – the more the better, for He will use it justly. And therein is the touchstone of the whole matter; every man among us will say the more power our leaders have the better. For is not every true leader something of a God, who approaches the nearer to that likeness when he does "justice and judgment?" We are told in the Book of Mormon of a certain people who "had all things common among them,"[10] but we are also told that every man dealt justly one with another.

The constitution of our society lays down the law of leadership in these words: "The rights of the priesthood are inseparably connected with the powers of heaven, and that the powers of heaven cannot be controlled nor handled only on the principles of righteousness. That they may be conferred upon us it is true, but when we undertake to cover our sins, or to gratify our pride, or to exercise control, or dominion or compulsion upon the souls of the children of men in any degree of unrighteousness, behold the heavens withdraw themselves the spirit of the Lord is grieved, and when it is withdrawn, Amen to the Priesthood or

10 3 Nephi 26:19; 4 Nephi 1:3.

the authority of that man."[11] If that part of our constitution is strictly adhered to, we need never fear about placing too much power in the hands of our leaders.

(Reprinted from the Economic Order of Heaven,
Joseph W. Musser, Chapter 9
The Contributor 7:134-142)

Notable Quotes on Property & Land

"The land shall not be sold forever; for the land is Mine; for ye are strangers and sojourners with Me."
Leviticus 25:23.

"And again, I command thee that thou shalt not covet thine own property."
D&C 19:26.

"When we consecrate our property to the Lord it is to administer to the wants of the poor and needy, for this is the law of God; it is not for the benefit of the rich, those who have no need;"
Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 127.

"The earth, therefore, and all things therein, are the general property of all mankind, from the immediate gift of the creator."
William Blackstone, Commentaries.

"Men did not make the earth. ... It is the value of the improvements only, and not the earth itself, that is individual property."
Thomas Paine.

"All the property that is necessary to a man for the conservation of the individual and the propagation of the species, is his natural right which none may justly deprive him of; but all property superfluous to such purposes is the property of the public."
Benjamin Franklin.

"Whenever there are in any country uncultivated lands and unemployed poor, it is clear that the laws of property have been so far extended as to violate their natural right. ... The earth is given as a common stock for men to labor and live on."
Thomas Jefferson.

11 D. & C. 121:36, 37.

“The land, the earth that God gave to man for his home, his sustenance and support, should never be the possession of any man, corporation, society or unfriendly government, any more than the air or water - if as much. An individual or enterprise requiring land should hold no more in their own right than is needed for their home and sustenance, and never more than they have in actual use in the prudent management of their legitimate business, and this much should not be permitted when it creates an exclusive monopoly. All that is not so used should be held for the free use of every family to make homesteads, and to hold them so long as they are occupied.”

Abraham Lincoln.

“If I would speak frankly, that where private property rules, where money is the measure of all things for everyone, it is virtually impossible for society to flourish under righteous administration. That is, unless one thinks it right and proper that every good thing be owned by immoral people, or that prosperity consists of a few owning everything, albeit the favorite few themselves are not at all happy, while all the others live in abject misery.”

St. Sir Thomas More, Utopia.

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel

"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."

Volume 2

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"These Signs Shall Follow Them That Believe"

An Overview of the Principle of Women Administering Blessings

Before he ascended into heaven, the resurrected Jesus gave one last sermon, in which he stated:

> "... these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."[1]

What is interesting about this passage is that Jesus is speaking not just of the Apostles or other priesthood holders possessing these spiritual gifts (or signs), but all those "that believe." Men and women can both exercise faith, both be blessed for it, and through that faith and can obtain God's power to bless others.

Such blessings can come through prayer, but also - as the Saviour points out - through the laying on of hands. Yet modern Christians (mainstream Mormons included) are not used the ideas of women laying on hands to heal the sick. This has generally been the function of the priesthood holder, but it was not always this way amongst the Latter-day Saints.

Women can administer to each other

In a Relief Society meeting held on the 12th of April 1842 the Prophet Joseph addressed the sisters on this subject. He affirmed that the "signs" Jesus spoke of, including being able to "lay hands on the sick" applied "whether male or female." Evidently some of the women had either been inspired by this passage or had been prompted by the Spirit and had begun giving such blessings of healing. This had led to what Joseph considered "foolish" criticisms against such women, as others had felt they were "not doing right." However the Prophet pointed out that "if the people had common sympathies they would rejoice that the sick could be healed," and he told the Sisters that if some of them "should have faith to heal the sick," then, "let all hold their tongues, and let everything roll on."[2]

An expanded version of his instructions in the History of the Church? adds that he continued on this subject by stating:

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1 Mark 16:17-18, see also Mormon 9:24; D&C 24:13; 35:9 & 84:65-72.

2 Nauvoo Relief Society Minutes, 12 April 1842, see Words of Joseph Smith, Ehat & Cook, under date.

> "Respecting females administering for the healing of the sick, he further remarked, there could be no evil in it, if God gave His sanction by healing; that there could be no more sin in any female laying hands on and praying for the sick than in wetting the face with water; it is no sin for anybody to administer that has faith, or if the sick have faith to be healed by their administrations."[3]

Not necessary to always call Elders

If this counsel applied to women blessing one-another, it also related to their motherly instinct to help their children when they were in times of sickness, as Brother Brigham Young pointed when speaking to the sisters in his day:

> "Learn to take proper care of your children. If any of them are sick the cry now, instead of 'Go and fetch the Elders to lay hands on my child!' is, 'Run for a doctor.' Why do you not live so as to rebuke disease? It is your privilege to do so without sending for the Elders. You should go to work to study and see what you can do for the recovery of your children. ... Study and learn something for yourselves. It is the privilege of a mother to have faith and to administer to her child; this she can do herself, as well as sending for the Elders to have the benefit of their faith."[4]

It can be clearly seen that sending for the Elders was seen as an optional thing, perhaps beneficial when the need was not so urgent, or they were conveniently nearby. In the case described by President Young he seems to have been speaking of a women at home alone with her children, but of course if her husband is at home and is a faithful man it would probably be more ideal to let him - as the patriarch of her family - take the lead of such administrations when he is there.

Can administer with husband

Yet it is not just in cases when the husband is away or when administering to other women that a woman can be involved in giving blessings. In the "Question and Answer" section of the Improvement Era in 1907 President Joseph F. Smith was asked, "Does a wife hold the priesthood in connection with her husband? and may she lay hands on

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3 History of the Church 4:602-4.

4 Brigham Young JD vol 13 pg. 155. "I want a wife that can take care of my children when I am away, who can pray, lay on hands, anoint with oil, and baffle the enemy; and this is a spiritual wife." (9 April 1844, Nauvoo, General Conference, History of the Church 6:321-2)

the sick with him, with authority?" To which he answered:

> "A wife does not hold the priesthood in connection with her husband, but she enjoys the benefits thereof with him; and if she is requested to lay hands on the sick with him, or with any other officer holding the Melchizedek priesthood, she may do so with perfect propriety."[5]

The practice of women administering to the sick was not a rare and uncommon occurrence in the early days of the Church, as can be seen from the words of Orson Pratt upon the subject:

> "How many scores and scores of cases have there been in this Church, every year since it was organized, where the parents, both brethren and sisters, have had power over disease, through the Spirit of God being poured out upon them, and their children have been healed through the laying on of their hands? … Has God ever said that these gifts should be unnecessary in the Church?"[6]

The wording of blessings given by women administering

In 1914 the First Presidency issued a statement which clarified the wording which women should use in giving blessings:

> It is proper for sisters to lay on hands, using a few simple words, ... [but] instead of using the word "seal" use the word "confirm."[7]

The word "seal" presumably is not used because 'sealing' is a Priesthood function. Likewise, although some women have supposed that they are administering by virtue of their husbands Priesthood the Church leaders made it clear in a letter in 1880 that this was not the case:

> "It is the privilege of all faithful women and lay members of the Church, who believe in Christ, to administer to all the sick or afflicted in their respective families, either by the laying on of

5 Improvement Era 10:4.

6 Orson Pratt Journal of Discourses Vol 16 pg 291 November 2, 1873.

7 Messages of the First Presidency. Note: However there does seem to be instances of women using the word "seal" (perhaps after their Endowments, special appointment, or 'higher blessings'). Lulu Richards (who has been editor of the Women's Exponent) in a letter to Lorenzo Snow, dated 9 April 1901, said Eliza R. Snow had taught her and others that, "a very important part of the sacred ordinance of administration to the sick was the sealing of the anointing."

hands, or by the anointing with oil in the name of the Lord: but they should administer in these sacred ordinances, not by virtue and authority of the priesthood, but by virtue of their faith in Christ, and the promises made to believers: and thus they should do in all their ministrations."[8]

No need to be set apart to administer

President Eliza R. Snow in the official Relief Society magazine, the Woman's Exponent, was asked "Is it necessary for sisters to be set apart to officiate in the sacred ordinances of washing, anointing, and laying on of hands in administering to the sick?" To this she answered:

> "It certainly is not. Any and all sisters who honor their holy endowments, not only have the right, but should feel it a duty whenever called upon to administer to our sisters in these ordinances, which God has graciously committed to His daughters as well as to His sons; and we testify that when administered and received in faith and humility they are accompanied with all mighty power.
>
> Inasmuch as God our Father has revealed these sacred ordinances and committed them to His Saints, it is not only our privilege but our imperative duty to apply them for the relief of human suffering."[9]

To this she added that this was the 'norm' of the time as she related that "thousands can testify that God has sanctioned the administration of these ordinances [of healing the sick] by our sisters with the manifestation of His healing influence."

No need to have received Endowments first

Some have wondered whether only women who have received their Endowments or even 'Second Anointings' are entitled to give blessings, yet President Joseph F. Smith clarified that it was not essential:

> "... namely in the clause pertaining to women administering to children, ... those sisters need not necessarily be only those who had received their endowments, for it was not always possible for women to have that privilege and women of faith might do so [give blessings]."[10]

8 Circular Letter, 6 October 1880.
9 Women's Exponent 13:61, 15 September 1884.
10 First Presidency, 17 December 1909. Relief Society Minutes.

Following the death of President Smith, however, the practice fell into disuse and obscurity, and is currently look upon with suspicion amongst some members of the Church unacquainted with these teachings and its history. Yet whenever the Saints have faith in God and understanding of His gospel, this blessing will inevitably continue amongst the faithful. As "whether male or female" "these signs shall follow them that believe."

The Scriptural Principle of Rebaptism

An Ancient and Modern Practice

Rebaptism is currently only performed in the Church for the readmittance into the Church of previously excommunicated members. However, among Latter-day Saints prior to the turn of the century, the word rebaptism carried with it a wider meaning and was performed for a variety of other reasons, such as personal rededication, repentance, and even for health.

In scholarly treatments of the doctrine of rebaptism by Mormon historians any scriptural references to this practice are entirely absent. Because of this some might assume that the ordinance was newly introduced in this dispensation, and was not part of the restoration of the Gospel. Yet, Joseph spoke of it being God's design that all the beliefs and practices reintroduced in our era, would be but a repetition of those shared by former-day Saints of more ancient times:

> "Now the purpose in Himself in the winding up scene of the last dispensation is that all things pertaining to that dispensation should be conducted precisely in accordance with the preceding dispensations."[1]

This dispenses with the theory that rebaptism (or any other principle or ordinance) is solely of modern origin, and as we look once again at the ancient Bible and Book of Mormon in light of Latter-day revelation and Church history we will discover that it played an important part in God's plans anciently and in the last century in the lives of many faithful Saints. One contemporary of Joseph Smith recollected how the Prophet Joseph himself used the scriptures to support the practice:

> "About the time the doctrine of rebaptism for members in the Church was first revealed in Nauvoo, Joseph, the great seer and revelator to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, made some remarks on the subject. On one occasion he read, among other scriptures, Hebrews, 6th chapter, 1st and 2nd verses, as follows:
>
> `Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.'[2]

1 5 October 1840, Teachings 168-9, History 4:208-9

2 Hebrews 6:1-2

> The Prophet said the first verse should read: "Therefore, not leaving the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, etc."[3] This explanation not only made the entire subject of the two verses clear but reconciled them with other scriptures. Notwithstanding Paul is made to say "leaving," etc., the inference is clear that if the foundation of repentance, baptism and the laying on of hands should be re-laid they would have to perform those works over again, as every careful reader of the text must see. This also corroborates [John's teachings in the book of Revelation][4]: "Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent and do the first works."[5] All latter-day Saints know that the first works after repentance are baptism and the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost.
>
> Here we find a presiding elder of a branch or ward of the Church commanded to perform these works over again, under pain of removal if he failed to obey the divine behest. Many more passages might be quoted to the same effect, but these are sufficient for my purpose. Joseph's translation not only reconciles the text with itself, but also with other scriptures, as already shown, and as was explained by the Prophet."[6]

That Joseph was inspired to re-introduce this early Christian practice - to all who wished to receive it - is confirmed by Brother Brigham Young, who recollected that in 1840, "came a revelation, that the Saints could be baptized and re-baptized when they chose."[7] There were, however, previous occasions on which this ordinance took place and scriptural support for their occurrence, as we will examine.

1) <u>For Remission of Sins</u>

Probably the earliest case of rebaptism for the remission of sins was that of David Johnson, who, on 7 May 1832, requested and received the ordinance because he "had lived unworthily of the communion of the sacrament."[8]

Most of those who re-entered the waters for such reasons were not considered by their Church leaders to have been guilty of any gross

3 See Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 328; Words of Joseph Smith, p. 255 (15 October 1843); JST Hebrews 6:1.

4 Originally incorrectly referenced, "a revelation to the Church of Ephesus".

5 Revelation 2:5.

6 Daniel Tyler "Recollections," Juvenile Instructor 27, 1892, p.94.

7 Journal of Discourses 18:241, 23 June 1876. In Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 462, John A. Widstoe edited this passage to remove the reference to rebaptism, a mistake which has been repeated (as it uses Widstoe's book as it's source) in the recent LDS Church manual, Teaching of the Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young, p. 347.

8 Journal of Jared Carter, under date.

misconduct. In fact, as contemporary records show, many members in good standing were baptized for the remission of sins. They sought to put behind them personal faults and failings and start afresh, with the slate wiped clean.

As Joseph pointed out such Saints were "laying again the foundation of repentance" through being baptized again, and thus - as John the Beloved put it - were repeating "the first works" which the Articles of Faith tells us are: baptism, and the "laying on of hands" (along with principles of faith and repentance).

Similarly, President Young advised many of the members in his day to "go and be baptized for the remission of sins, and start afresh, that temptation may not overcome you again; pause and reflect, that you be not overcome by the evil one unawares."[9]

Whilst, undoubtedly, many of the Saints were sincere in their desire to receive a remission of their sins through inward repentance and rebaptism, yet some seem to have abused the process by treating it lightly, and by 1897 (due to such misuse) the First Presidency "felt" that this particular form of rebaptism "ought to be stopped."[10]. Some studies, including the Encyclopaedia of Mormonism, incorrectly claims that this proved to be the end of all versions of this ordinance, however, records show that the practice continued for the purpose of rededication and for health at least until 1922 within Utah temples[11].

2) <u>For Personal Rededication / Renewal of Covenants</u>

Breaking the commandments and requiring a remission of sins is a concept with which most of us are personally familiar, and few members of the Church could claim to have never needed to ask God for forgiveness for something they did wrong. However, most of us are just as guilty for those commandments we do not keep as for those we transgress. Our mental and physical laziness that leads to sins of ommission, by being guilty of not doing all that God asks of us. When we find ourselves in this position it is time for us to make a personal rededication to the Lord, which is a situation some of the Church officers in Mormon's day found themselves in. As he stated in one of his epistles to his son, Moroni, many of the Priesthood holders of his day had need of rebaptism for what may have been similar reasons, and had to qualify to receive such a privilege:

> And now I speak concerning baptism. Behold, elders, priests, and teachers were baptized; and they were not baptized save they brought forth fruit meet that they were worthy of it.[12]

9 Brigham Young, Journal of Discourses 1:324
10 George Q. Cannon, Conference Report, October 1897.
11 Mormon Hierarchy, D. Michael Quinn, p. 632.
12 Moroni 6:1.

That this verse is speaking of rebaptism is made clear by the fact that the writer speaks of Elders and Priests being baptized, whereas, if they followed the normal pattern of progression through the Gospel, they would have been baptized first long before ever being ordained, and therefore we can assume with some certainty that it is rebaptism that is being referred to[13]. That they were still considered Elders, etc. at the time of rebaptism and afterwards shows gives the impression that they were not considered unworthy of holding such an office.

Evidence that rebaptism for the renewal of covenants was a common practice, even amongst those Saints outside Deseret, can be seen from the following journal entry of Oliver B. Huntington:

> "Now it was almost a general thing through England that the Saints were being re-baptized, for they had many and mostly become old and cold and it required a renewal of covenants and fresh works together with mere faith and diligence, to give the work new impetus and revive the dropping spirits of the Saints and the work generally."[14]

3) For Group Reformation

These rebaptisms in England[15] it seems were encouraged by Brigham Young as part of a larger reformation which had already begun in Utah in the mid-1850's[16], as we can see from a letter he sent to Orson Pratt in the mission field:

> "... let a reformation be stirred up among the Saints; fire up each other, and then all the Saints; let all participate, and when they have sufficiently cleansed the inside of the platter, let them cleanse the outside, and renew their covenants in the waters of baptism, and abide in the truth, and be alive in the Church and Kingdom of God."[17]

13 There seems to be an exception to this rule at the beginning of new dispensations, as in the case of John the Baptist, who was ordained when but eight days old by an angel (D&C 84:28), and Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery (JS-H 1:68-71).

14 Oliver B. Huntington Diary, 7 February, 1847, p. 114.

15 "Some historians have thought the decline of Mormonism in Britain came from teaching plural marriage. But according to Peterson, the decline came about because of the "Reformation" of the 1850s. Many Mormons were not rebaptized and thus were not put back on the rolls. It was the rebaptism policy, not the excommunication of many Church members, that devastated the British Mission." Ronald G. Watt's review of Paul Peterson's article in Mormons in Early Victorian Britain, BYU Studies 30:4, p. 86. One wonders, however if one of the major reasons they did not apply for rebaptism was because of the issue of polygamy.

16 For an overview of this period see Encyclopaedia of Mormonism, vol. 3, Reformation of 1856-1857.

17 Letter of Brigham Young to Orson Pratt in England, Mill. Star, 19:97.

The Reorganized Church saw such a step as a departure from Joseph's teachings[18], which ironically showed how much they had forgotten about the Prophet's own actions as Church President, for a similar reformation had taken place in the 1840's, which Joseph himself had participated in. The first indication of the need for such a process to take place seems to be the remarks of his brother Hyrum to the Nauvoo High Council that, ""there was a general want of action in the Church that he wanted every one to start anew."[19] During an afternoon meeting four months later the authorities at Nauvoo expanded this into a call for a reformation within the Church[20]. The following year one member enthusiastically wrote, "Nearly All the Church have been Baptized again, for the Remission of their Sins, since they joined the Church, I have also, by the hands of Br. Joseph (as he himself has been,)"[21]

In the year prior to the arrival of Jesus upon the American continent, it is recorded that Nephi preached the need for repentance to his people, and that all of those who repented were also baptized, and many men were ordained to the ministry[22]. However, after the destructions of his nation, he was baptized again, along with his brethren, many of whom - like him - were undoubtedly amongst those who had been baptized and ordained previously:

> And it came to pass that Nephi went down into the water and was baptized.
>
> And he came up out of the water and began to baptize. And he baptized all those whom Jesus had chosen.
>
> And it came to pass when they were all baptized and had come up out of the water, the Holy Ghost did fall upon them, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost and with fire.[23]

Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr. understood this chapter to be referring to the rebaptism of all those who had been baptized previously, and wrote in Doctrines of Salvation: "When Christ appeared to the Nephites on this continent, he commanded them to be baptized, although they had been baptized previously for the remission of their sins. We read how Nephi beheld angels who came and ministered to him daily; how he baptized all who came to be baptized for the remission of sins; how he organized the Church; and how he even raised his brother from the dead, since he held the priesthood. Then we read that the Savior commanded Nephi and the people to be baptized again, because he had organized

18 Life of Joseph F. Smith, p. 134.
19 Nauvoo High Council Record, 18 Jan. 1842, p. 35.
20 Oliver H. Olney Papers, 1 May 1842.
21 Jacob Scott to Mary Scott Warnock, 28 February 1843.
22 3 Nephi 7:23-26.
23 3 Nephi 19:11-13.

anew the Church under the gospel. Before that it had been organized under the law."[24]

4) Upon Organisation / Reorganisation of the Church

The day the Church was organized, 6 April 1830, was also the first example of rebaptism in this dispensation, and a latter-day example of rebaptism being required at the organisation, restoration reorganisation of the Church. As we read in Joseph's history, which has been canonized as part of the Pearl of Great Price, he and Oliver Cowdery were first baptized following the visit of John the Baptist a year earlier[25]. Yet, on the date the Church was officially set up, the Prophet Joseph and those who had been baptized previously were again baptized and admitted as members[26].

Similarly Alma, who first organized the Church[27] amongst the Nephites was himself rebaptized at the waters of Mormon with those who became members on that occasion, as can be seen from the following passage:

> And now it came to pass that Alma took Helam, he being one of the first, and went and stood forth in the water, and cried, saying: O Lord, pour out thy Spirit upon thy servant, that he may do this work with holiness of heart.
>
> And when he had said these words, the Spirit of the Lord was upon him, and he said: Helam, I baptize thee, having authority from the Almighty God, as a testimony that ye have entered into a covenant to serve him until you are dead as to the mortal body; and may the Spirit of the Lord be poured out upon you; and may he grant unto you eternal life, through the redemption of Christ, whom he has prepared from the foundation of the world.
>
> And after Alma had said these words, both Alma and Helam were buried in the water; and they arose and came forth out of the water rejoicing, being filled with the Spirit.
>
> And again, Alma took another, and went forth a second time into the water, and baptized him according to the first, only he did not bury himself again in the water.[28]

24 Joseph Fielding Smith Jr., Doctrines of Salvation 2:336.

25 Joseph Smith - History 1:70-71.

26 "...Joseph Smith and those who had been baptized prior to April 6, 1830, were again baptized on the day of the organization of the Church." (Deseret News, March 30, 1935, p. 6)

27 3 Nephi 5:12. Although he began and presided over the Church, Mosiah gave him the authority to do so, and presided over him - Mosiah 29:42. Thus a differentiation between the offices of Priesthood and Church President.

28 Mosiah 18:12-15, see Mosiah 17:1-4.

Upon arriving in the Salt Lake Valley the Church underwent a reorganisation, in which even the President of the Church and the Twelve were rebaptized, as Wilford Woodruff observed in his journal:

> "On this day the Twelve were re-baptized. Why? Because the Church, having broken old ties in the East was, in a way, experiencing a new birth. Because, owing to conditions of life on the plains, regular Church routine could not always be observed. For this reason for non-observance of certain regulations were made by the people and accepted by their leaders. But now those who stood at the head of the Church wanted a gesture of support to themselves and a sign that willing obedience would be given to the rules of the Church. This was affected by re-baptism."[29]

It seems too that another common reason for rebaptism was due to lost records, or a question over the validity of the original ordinance.

5) To Ensure Correct / Complete Authority

R. Lanier Britsch, a BYU associate professor of history, wrote an article on the "Founding of the Samoan Mission", in which he relates how a missionary by the name of Joseph H. Dean felt the need to rebaptise another elder, Samuela Manoa, and reordain him, "because of the questionable authenticity of his first rebaptism" which was performed "by a man whose priesthood authority could be doubted." This took place on 25 June 1888.[30] Undoubtedly there have been many more times in Church history when the authority of the person who performed an ordinance has been in question, either through their personal unrighteousness, apostasy, or through incorrect or incomplete administration.[31] This was a problem which the Apostles of Jesus' day also encountered:

> And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,
>
> He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.
>
> And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.
>
> Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of

29 Wilford Woodruff Journal, August 6, 1847.

30 BYU Studies 18:1, p. 19.

31 See Truth Seeker 3:4, An Uninterrupted Line of Authority for questions over the validity of Priesthood administration in this century.

repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

When they heard [this], they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

And when Paul had laid [his] hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.[32]

Little mention has been made by General Authorities of the Church of this ordinance for many years, and those, such as James E. Talmage, who did make brief reference to it, seem to wish to to divert attention away from the practice having once been a prominent feature of the faith, and instead seek to reinforce the Church's current stance, which he summarises thus, "There is no ordinance of rebaptism in the Church distinct in nature, form, or purpose, from other baptism;"[33] Those of those who have read this article, now know though (if they did not before) that rebaptism was once common amongst members before the turn of the century, and was been a feature of the Gospel for thousands of years.

Because this study was designed to centre primarily on those scriptural references to the practice of rebaptism which were common amongst Latter-day Saints before the turn of the century, those types of rebaptism which the scriptures do not seem to make comment upon, such as rebaptism for health and for entry into the Kingdom of God, United Order, or Celestial (plural) Marriage are beyond the scope of this article. Those quotes which have been used are but a small selection of ones on this subject, upon which at least one book and a couple of articles have been written.[34] As far as the author is aware the only group of Mormons to continue this ordinance are LDS Fundamentalists.

This article previously appeared
in the British edition of Messenger magazine

32 Acts 19:1-6.

33 James E. Talmage, Articles of Faith, p.142-3; Jesus the Christ, p.744. Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr. summarized it thus, "There is really in the Church no such thing as rebaptism." (Doctrines of Salvation 2:332), and Bruce R. McConkie put it this way, "There is no need for and no ordinance of rebaptism in the Church." (Mormon Doctrine, Baptism).

34 Rebaptism, Ogden Kraut; The Practice of Rebaptism at Nauvoo, D. Michael Quinn, BYU Studies 18:2, p. 226; Rebaptism: A Manual, Dialogue 19:40, Spring 1986.

Address on the Book of Mormon

given by president Waird MacDonald
at the Northern California Mission Conference
9th February 1950

I would like to talk to you this morning about the Book of Mormon, because I believe all our missionary work stems from it. Very few people have ever come into this Church except they have read this book, and it seems that this book is the thing that converts them. We have many learned men and almost all of them have written a book to explain our gospel, and they have written about the Book of Mormon, and, yet, with all these books together, they do not convert the people, they may interest them, but they do not get into the waters of baptism until they have gone into this book.

What is the Book of Mormon? The greatest student of the Book of Mormon that this Church has ever had, and the man who studied it the most, and became the most profound in it, was Orson Pratt. I would like to read what he said about this book in 1851 while in England – nearly a hundred years ago:

> "The Book of Mormon claims to be the sacred history of ancient America, written by a succession of ancient prophets, who inhabited this vast continent. The plates of gold, containing this history were discovered by a young man named Joseph Smith, through the ministery of a holy angel, on the evening and morning of the 21st and 22nd of September 1823. Four years after their discovery, on the morning of the 22nd of September 1827. The angel of the Lord permitted Mr. Smith to take these sacred records from the place of their deposit. The hill in which they were found buried is situated near the town of Manchester, Ontario county, New York with the plates were also found a Urim and Thummim. Each plate was not far from seven by eight inches in width and length, being not quite as thick as common tin. Each was filled on both sides with engraven Egyptian characters; and the whole were bound together in a volume, as the leaves of a book. And fastened on one edge with three rings running through each. This volume was something near six inches in thickness, a part of which was sealed. The characters or letters upon the unsealed part were small and beautifully engraved. Mr. Smith, through the Urim and Thummim, and by the power and gift of God, translated this re cord into the English language. This translation contains about the same amount of reading. As the Old Testament. A large edition of this wonderful book was first published early in 1830."

This is the most comprehensive statement about the Book of Mormon I have ever read. Nothing essential is left out in this first paragraph in a series of tracts which he wrote on his first mission.

This book I have is one of that first edition, it came from Kirtland, Ohio, and was given to me by a congregationalist minister who had acquired it there. It is the only book in the world, out of all the millions of books in the libraries of the world which was brought to the earth by an angel from the throne of God. That makes it different from all other books. The angel made fifteen trips to this planet from the throne of God to see that this book was properly translated and printed, so that it might be given to the world. And it became the basis of the restoration of the Church of God, and it was given to a boy. The translation was made when he was 23 years of age – and he was unlearned.

The plates from which he translated it were witnessed by three men, his companions, one of them, who was his scribe – the other two were his benefactor and his friend and these three men, solemnly testify that an angel showed them the plates. This young unlearned boy, Joseph Smith, showed these plates and the book to eight other people. Twelve people in all have seen the gold plates from which the record was translated and have so testified.

Since that date this book has been translated into sixteen different languages and into thirty-one dialects. And it has become the greatest missionary in our Church. It is a book that testified of itself, for in the final book – the final chapter of the book – a promise is made to the reader that if he will ask God, the Lord, by his Holy Spirit, He will manifest the truth of the book to him. That is so different from any other book in the world that it be comes outstanding

This book is 588 pages long, and is a collection of books, similar to the Bible of sacred writings – and it contains 14 other books besides the words of the compiler, once while in Los Angeles a lawyer came to the mission home. He said to me: “I have just flown back from Salt Lake. While there I visited your Temple Square and I heard a young man lecture about your Church and he mentioned a book called your Mormon Bible and I remembered, as I listened to him that several years before two young men had called at my door and had offered me a book which I purchased from them. I put it away in my library and forgot about it so after returning from Salt Lake City, I hunted through my library until I found the book.” And that man spent the rest of the night reading it. He said, “my job is to brief law cases to present them to the Supreme Court. A synopsis of each side must be very carefully done. Otherwise, an error, a mistake, in time, place or date or argument, would disqualify it before the Supreme Court, so my job is to make a very careful check of both the prosecution and the defense so that when it is presented to the court there can be no possibility of its being thrown out

on account of a technicality.

"I have briefed the Book of Mormon. I am very much disturbed about it. I have never found or briefed anything but what I have found some errors due to human frailties, the human inclination to error: I have briefed the Book of Mormon and I am disturbed because I have found no mistakes, no disagreements as to time, place, event or person. I can't accept this story about gold plates and angels, but I can't understand a book so complex, so filled with so many dates and places and names and times, and yet find it without error." Did Joseph Smith write a book that amazes and confuses a man trained in the legal profession? You answer that!

Joseph Smith made the very simple statement that he, by the power of God translated this book from these plates: he was unlearned, yet he gave this book to the world. Six hundred pages!

Once in an interview in San Francisco with a very noted woman novelist she made this statement: "I withheld the publication of one of my books for a period of six months while I tried to coin a new name for the heroine. Finally, at the end of six months, I called her Mary, and let the book go." She was a novelist with a lot of ability and training, the graduate of a college. An average novelist is an extremely productive one if they can produce one book a year. To find one of our famous novelists with ten books to their name over a period of twenty or thirty years is very unusual. Yet, here is a book produced by a boy unlearned, six hundred pages not like the average novel which concerns itself with just a few characters that walk across the stage with a backdrop of maybe a few others to give color, but the whole thing concerned primarily with three or four characters, and takes a year to produce yet here is a book not concerned with just a few persons, but literally thousands, literally hundreds of thousands in this book. Concerned not with just a few of one family, but with three nations. So complex in plot and detail that it is beyond the power of any novelist to produce. In the book are 297 new words not found in any other book in the world, not found in any encyclopedia or dictionary. Look at our woman novelist who tried to find one new word. Have you ever tried to do that? And when you have labored long, figured you have got a new word — something original – you may be surprised that Webster thought of it a long time ago if you look in the dictionary you'll probably find it. Yet in the Book of Mormon are 297 words not found in any dictionary – not found in any encyclopedia. Did Joseph Smith coin 297 words in 71 days — the actual days of translation – when the experienced novelist who is far above the average in accomplishments, the woman who lived by her wits, who was college trained, couldn't coin one in six months?

When you hear the word Nephi, and Zarahemla, and Corianthmur, what comes to your mind? They come from the Book of Mormon – and only from the Book of Mormon. We have come to know many

languages and we can tell the antecedent of almost any person by his name. We know whether he is Dutch, or German, or French, or Japanese. Yet, the words of the Book of Mormon are none of these. We know that they are not Chinese, Italian, French or English. They are entirely Book of Mormon names.

It is a very marvelous thing when we look at the book itself, given to us by this boy. That these names are all on an even keel. They are not up and down. Yet in our own families when our parents give each one of us a name, it is surprising that some of our names come out of the Bible, some are English, some are Scots, and some are Dutch. Even in one little family the names are all up and down. Yet the Book of Mormon names have an even keel in all their antecedents. Did Joseph Smith do this? You answer that!

We look to the words of Shakespeare: forty plays — tragedies, comedies, and dramas. And we know him as the top of all the writers of the world, for in those forty plays — every human emotion, every human character known, stalks across the stage. Anything that can possibly happen to your life you will find its counterpart in one of Shakespeare's plays. Yet, in all of Shakespeare's plays, with his romantic king Richard and his good king John, he has none so good as king Benjamin; in all the villains that cross the stage in all of Shakespeare's plays are none so wicked, so low, so vile, and so mean as king Noah in the Book of Mormon. Here is this 23 year old boy, with a good king clear out beyond anything that Shakespeare made. And with a villain lower than any Shakespeare had dreaded up did Joseph Smith out-do Shakespeare? You answer that!

The lofty tone of the Book of Mormon is beyond the power or ability of any single man to have compiled or written. The literary aspects of the book are beyond the power of any man to do. The very first sentence in the book establishes the book as something entirely outside of the performance of a person who is attempting to hoist on the public a fraud. "I Nephi, being born of goodly parents, therefore I was taught somewhat in all the learning of my father." Does that sound like somebody who was trying to put over a fraud? The oldest civilization (Chinese) we have in the world today the very basis of it, is the worship of ancestors. Did Joseph Smith steal from the heathen Chinese? The very essence of their religion is in the first few sentences: "I Nephi, having been born of goodly parents." the proudest thing in his life was the fact that he had good parents it is a queer way, indeed to begin a story or a book.

In the 29th chapter of Alma: "O that I were an angel, and could have the wish of mine heart, that I might go forth and speak with the trump of God. And with a voice to shake the Earth, and cry repentance unto every people." That is the way up here when you come to it. That is high water and is beyond the power of fraud!

Alma's 49th chapter — his letter to his son, his wayward son, convincing him of the resurrection. Not even second to Paul in the new testament is Alma's learned dissertation as he gives his legal arguments to his son about the sureness of the resurrection. What did Joseph Smith know about legal arguments? He went to the third grade in a country school, to the fifth grade in his school but comparable to the third grade now. What did Joseph Smith know about legal arguments and the resurrection that he could produce something that even surpassed the learned Paul of Tarsus? You answer that!

And if you want to read a debate — a debate with an unbeliever – read the one between Zeezrom and Amulek and Alma. Read the one between Gideon and Korihor and Alma, and read the one about Ammon and king Lamoni. These arguments, these things within the book, are so beyond the power of one young man to produce that it is utterly preposterous to even think for a moment that Joseph Smith produced the book.

Therefore. There is only one thing to consider about the book. Beyond the ordinary things in life as it is, we have to accept that simple, straight forward story that Joseph Smith told – that an angel came and gave him the plates and by the power of God he translated them and then he gave them to the world.

The migrations in the Book or Mormon of the people, backwards and forwards, three times and the people crossed the ocean — three different groups of people came to America. Did Joseph Smith dream up all these great migrations and ocean trips, so that there is no contradiction in time, place or event or name? You answer that!

The book itself is its greatest witness and our only trouble as Latter-day Saints is that we haven't read it ourselves. We know so little about it. We have taken it for granted, and yet the Lord, in the beginning of the establishment of the dispensation of the fullness of times, began it with this great missionary book.

In the summer of 1930 at Yale university, a professor read king Benjamin's last speech to his people, and when he had finished, the professor said: "that is the greatest talk ever given on political economy. If the men of the world today would follow the works of king Benjamin, it would solve the ills of mankind." Did Joseph Smith know anything about political economy? There is only one answer to that. Joseph Smith did not write it. It came as he said.

In every novel that is written. In every play that is produced, your author sets up his characters, describes them, and with the 8 or 10 characters in any book or any novel, you will probably find a use of four or five. The others are backdrops for the play. And I would like to call your attention to the characters of the Book of Mormon. The first one Nephi, the great prophet-king, what a magnificent character he is, he stands like a great giant in a social time that was controlled entirely by

the patriarchal order, in which the eldest son, by right, ruled after his father. And yet, Nephi, the third son, becomes the successor to his Father Lehi – then their king, a wonderful character finally the king of his people — the third son in a patriarchal order, who received the right to rule and to reign and what else happened to him? A young man who lived so close to the Lord that angels visited him and he is the only character in all religious lore — in all the writings that we have of all the prophets who lived — who ever saw the bodily form or the Holy Ghost! Nephi was covering a lot of ground when he attempted to describe the Holy Ghost when none of the other prophets had ever dared.

And then, standing like a giant tower in the middle of this Nephite history is Alma the Younger, the greatest missionary that one ever read about, the "apostle Paul of the Book of Mormon" — a young man who began as Paul — persecuting the Church – until he was struck down by the Lord, made a right about face and became a sword of righteousness for the Church. And when his father, Alma the elder, grew old, he ordained this young son of his to be the head of the Church, and then when the people followed the advice of the good king Mosiah, the son of that good king Benjamin, when they followed his advice and changed the manner of their government from a kingdom to judges, Alma was elected the first judge and the only man who was head of the Church and head of the government at the same time. But after eight years, the young Alma, so concerned with the missionary work, resigned his chief judgeship and spent the rest of his life as a great missionary, and his life is an amazing series of missionary experiences — the most thrilling you will find anywhere. They even surpass all the experiences that Paul ever had which are given so well in the New Testament. Follow Alma and read it and see the things that happen to him. None of these recorded in the New Testament come anywhere near those things – in their delivery from the jail from their enemies – it is an amazing story. Did Joseph Smith dream these up? You answer that and when he became old he walked out of the city of Zarahemla and the Lord took him unto himself – even as Moses, so great was this young Alma. What a characterization in a book. The very thought that Joseph Smith could have made up this great character in 71 days is beyond any possibility.

And then the final one in the book, the compiler of the record – Mormon. What a great man he was he was so great that Ammaron, the keeper of the records took this young boy when he was ten years of age and laid his hands on him and made him a prophet and then made him the keeper of the records and gave him this charge: "Watch what this people does. Make a record of it and when you are 24 go to a certain hill in another land and there you will find all the old records, and then you take them up and make a record of what happened in the last 14 years." What a charge that was! And when this boy was 16 he was such a mighty man in body and in mind that he was made general of all of the

Nephite armies and it was this man who, was the prophet over the people in their final struggle. He was the final great "general Eisenhower" – and in the final battle of annihilation at Cumorah he led all the army of the Nephites and he and 23 other generals with their 10,000 men each stood the onslaughts of the vast swords of the Lamanites in the struggle of annihilation, where more than a million men – not using atomic bombs for destruction, but simply axes and swords and spears – attacked one another until there was not a man left. Did Joseph Smith dream up such a situation? No, my brothers and sisters, the Book of Mormon is the word of God and you will find it in those little cards which you carry when the Prophet himself said, "we believe the Book of Mormon is the word of God." It was translated by the gift and power of God and the book it self is its own greatest witness; if we will only open its lids and study its literary content. We are easily convinced that Joseph Smith was not the author of the book, but was simply the instrument in the hands of God. It is the keystone which the Lord gave the world in the restoring of his Church to the earth in the dispensation of the fullness of times.

May we appreciate this great "missionary help" that we have with us – may we learn about it. We need not go down into Mexico and south America hunting self-evidences that may prove the Book of Mormon. We have all the evidence necessary in the book itself. A book, like the Bible, that is a compilation of other books, and it is an amazing thing that out of the 14 or 15 different writers in the books yet you can read Nephi and know the passages from Nephi, and almost any Book of Mormon student can easily tell where the passages come from — whether it was from Nephi or Alma or Heleman or 4th Nephi! Why? For the very same reason that every writer leaves his own flavor on the things he writes. Any newspaper man can pick up his paper and tell you which reporter wrote each story in the paper, because each one of us leaves our imprint on what we write. Just the same – every school teacher is able to return your paper to you when you forget to write your name in the upper left hand corner. Each writer leaves his own impression on the words he writes. If Joseph Smith – had written the Book of Mormon it would have all been the same. There would not have seen any difference in the writings of each one of the books. Yet, the writings are so different. The last writer in the book is so different from most of the other writers in the book. If Joseph Smith had written them all, they would have been alike – all the same yet as I said to you before, any of you can read Alma and know from whence it came. When you read Moroni it is an entirely different structure – a different manner of writing.

I bear testimony to you, my brothers and sisters, that this is the work of the Lord, and that the Book of Mormon is a holy book. This is especially your book as missionaries and if you want to convert men and

women you must teach them this book because the Lord will convert them when you present them this book, which he thought enough of to send an angel down 15 times to this earth to see that is was properly given. It is our job to warn all these people and to carry this book to them, and by the promises and power and the Spirit that will accompany this book, will the Lord touch their hearts and bring them to acknowledge the truth. May the Lord bless you in the great responsibility that is yours in this wonderful mission where is gathered out of all the world some of his choice spirits, for all the world looks to America and all America looks to California, and so people have come from everywhere and they are gathered here, these choice spirits - these adventuresome souls who have dared to come to the golden state, and the Lord is giving you the great opportunity, to touch their lives and bring to their attention the restored Church – so yours is a great heritage – yours is a great opportunity– yours is a tremendous responsibility. The Lord bless you and help you to carry it on, I pray in the name of Jesus, Amen.

Prophets and Opinions

Can Prophets Disagree on Different Points of View?

Everyone has opinions, points of view, or different perspectives. However we may phrase it we realize that there are some things we do not totally know or understand, and that we may speculate upon.

Opinions can be valuable, such as in the case of the views of someone who has great experience in his professional field upon a new project, or of a wise old grandparent who has seen or been through certain problems many times before in their life. Yet the conjecture of someone completely unacquainted with some situations might be considered of low value or worthless in comparison.

If a country's President has an opinion which is unpopular he is likely to have it seized by the media, and his character is likely to be judged upon it. If anyones opinions are in wide contrast to those around them they may be labeled "out of touch with reality," yet if they are in line with the majority they are more likely to be seen as a sage, and their words may be more easily accepted.

In all of these scenarios though no definite facts have been established by the giving or accepting of someones views, except that we learn that opinions are valued very differently depending on how close they are to conventional thinking, and upon who gives them and the position they are in.

For truth the world might look to scientists, historians, philosophers, and certain political ideologies. Religious peoples look however to sacred texts and personal spiritual experiences to define and judge the truth. Yet this begs the question, "did the writers of the scriptures ever give opinions within the texts they were inspired to write?" Is the Bible, for instance, solely God's words? A modern prophet had this to say on that subject:

> "I believe that the Bible contains the word of God, and the words of good men and the words of bad men; the words of good angels and the words of bad angels and words of the devil; and also the words uttered by the ass[1] when he rebuked the prophet in his madness."[2]

When angels or men speak within the scriptures it is usually easily identifiable, and distinct from when God speaks, or when a prophet is speaking as inspired to do so. However, the sacred writ is

1 Referring to Balaam's donkey, see Number 22:28.

2 Brigham Young, 29 May 1870, JD, Vol.13, p.176. He expressed this same thought a couple of months earlier we stated, "The Bible contains the word of God, the word of Jesus, of angels, of good men, of those tolerably good, of wicked men, and the words of the devil, ..." (20 Feb. 1870, JD 13:235)

primarily a compilation of those words intended to instruct us in true principles, whether through commandments, or good or bad examples for us to learn from.

Yet, just as we seek for wise counsel to guide us to meet the specific problems of our time, so too do some of the passage of scripture contain such 'advice' to the people of the time in which they wrote. This is a hard concept for some to accept. Some believe that all of the Bible is applicable to all of God's children in all ages and all verses are of the same weight, although some Jews may limit this view only to the Old Testament, and some Christians exclusively to the New Testament. Others view all commandments as relative to individuals, or groups of people at limited times, or consider the whole body of the revealed word to be only opinions.

The scriptures themselves cut a path between all of these views. They identify times when prophets gave their opinions and differentiate them as such. One prime example of this is Paul's first epistle to the Corinthians. It seems that there was some controversy amongst the group of Saints to which he wrote, and some problems – perhaps specific to them – that he felt he needed to give counsel upon.

Paul, although an inspired servant of the Lord did not claim to have revelation on the matter, but felt he had advice to share that may be of help to them. To make sure his readers understood this he began this section of his letter with the words, "I speak this by permission, and not of commandment,"[3] or as a more modern translation has paraphrased it, "This is only my suggestion. It's not meant to be an absolute rule."[4]

Through several of the subsequent verses he continues to remind them that his words are to be taken as opinion and not revelation. He does this with phrases such as "to the rest speak I, not the Lord,"[5] "I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment,"[6] and "I suppose therefore that this is good for the present."[7]

Some may say that this is only part of the imperfections of the Bible, and had it been translated or at least compiled correctly such a passage may have been left out, or that subsequent scribes changed his words to make them seem less certain. But us Latter-day Saints can settle this issue by an appeal to the Book of Mormon, which we believe to be the most correct of any book. Could it too contain opinions? We can let Alma answer that question:

> "Now, my son, I do not say that their resurrection cometh at the resurrection of Christ; but behold, I give it as my opinion, that the souls and the bodies are reunited, of the righteous, at the

3 1 Corinthians 7:6.
4 New Living Translation, ibid.
5 1 Corinthians 7:12.
6 1 Corinthians 7:25.
7 1 Corinthians 7:26.

resurrection of Christ, and his ascension into heaven."[8]

Alma's views in this case where later revealed to be true, but at the time he gave them it seems that this had not been revealed to him, although his speculation proved to be inspired.

A Modern Example

In our day prophets and apostles are not exempt from having points of view either. They are mortal men with minds that grasp after the things of eternity, who sometimes see more clearly from their position that we do from ours, but who are still able to have moments of speculation.

The role of the head of the Priesthood on the earth is to teach the doctrine necessary to exaltation and to dispense and oversee those ordinances necessary to obtain it, but this does not mean that every word he speaks is revelation. That is not something which any prophet has ever claimed. Brigham Young who gave sermons that he called scripture, would still – on some occasions – make it plain he was speaking as Brigham Young – the Man.

One subject over which prophets, apostles, and saints have wondered and imagined over is that of "daughters of Perdition." They have long asked, "were only men cast out of heaven?", and "is it possible for a women to become one?"

The scriptures only ever speak of "sons of Perdition,"[9] yet contain accounts of some very wicked women. This is a subject Joseph himself never weighed in on in any public discourse or any contemporarily recorded account. Although we have the word of Mosiah Hanock that the Prophet Joseph believed his vision (of the pre-existence in which only men were cast out) to be accurate.

Brigham Young on the other hand stated his belief that no woman "will never become an angel to the devil"[10] and he said he doubted "there is a female in all the regions of hell."[11] Yet Wilford Woodruff had a different idea and had "no doubt" "that there will also be daughters of Perdition."[12] Some years later President Joseph F. Smith also weighed in on the issue, and gave his own view that, "there would be no daughters of Perdition."[13]

One day we will probably know the answer to this question for

8 Alma 40:20.
9 There are eight references in scripture to Sons of Perdition, but none to daughters of Perdition, although there is one reference to a woman escaping hell (not necessarily outer darkness) in Alma 19:29.
10 "A Few Words of Doctrine," 8 October 1861, Church Historians Office.
11 Journal of Discourses 8:222.
12 29 Nov 1893, D. Michael Quinn, Extensions, p. 795.
13 26 Mar. 1903, D. Michael Quinn, Extensions p. 806.

ourselves. Perhaps we will be able to get a glimpse into the outer darkness of hell and see for ourselves, or perhaps by that point we may not worry or wonder about it.

In Conclusion

Prophets are entitled to their own views. They struggle with their own weaknesses, and yet the Saints are often guilty of expecting a degree of perfection from them that the Saints themselves do not possess. This was a tendency the Prophet Joseph faced in his day.

> "This morning ... I visited with a brother and sister from Michigan, who thought that 'a prophet is always a prophet;' but I told them that a prophet is a prophet only when he was acting as such."[14]

> "I was introduced to a man from the east. After hearing my name, he remarked that I was nothing but a man, indicating by his expression, that he had supposed that a person to whom the Lord should see fit to reveal His will, must be something more than a man."[15]

Yet at the moment there are many people who worry about the differing opinions of prophets, and take issues of little consequence to them personally and focus on them to the exclusion of principles of far more importance and relevance to their lives. They throw such quotes out as stumbling blocks for others to trip over, or use them as an excuse not to take inspired counsel or even revelations so seriously.

Some justify apostasy and claim authority based on such issues. But they and their followers fail to realize that whatever disagreements we have with them gives us no more authority or power, or make us right in undermining their difficult role. If we believe someone to be wrong in doctrine are we not as obliged to go to him personally, as the scriptures instruct us that we should do if we "have ought against"[16] him?

Whether the question is "was God a Savior in mortality" or "were Blacks neutral in the war in heaven?" or "where are the ten lost tribes?" we will find differing views from Apostles on these matters, and yet – despite individual imperfections - true Prophets have always been consistent on the requirements for exaltation, on the moral and ethical laws God expects of us, and have held the keys of the Priesthood in uninterrupted succession.

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14 History of the Church 5:265.
15 History of the Church 2:302.
16 Matthew 5:23-25.

There are many matters we have no obligation to know and God has no obligation to tell us. We are free to speculate, but remain responsible if we place too much faith in our speculations. Perhaps we should be rejoicing in the fact that our prophets have "like passions"[17] and wonder about the same things we do. Maybe in their thoughts we can sometimes find glimpses of higher truths, and insights into minds often focused on the infinite. Could it be that hearing their views could sometimes be a privilege, and we should be honored they have placed the trust in us to share them?

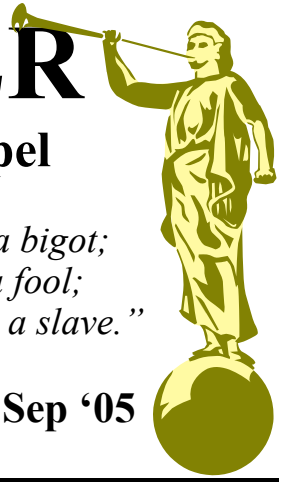
The responsibility of the head of God's Priesthood on the earth is to ensure that those doctrines, ordinances, and laws essential to our exaltation are carried out exactly how God gave them. In this mission there has always been absolute consistency between true prophets past, present and future. Beyond this role, however, there may be as many opinions as there have been prophets, and they have as much a right to their views as anyone else.

The Gospel is like a beautiful painting on an enormous canvas, on which we can only focus parts of our vision on at any one time. Others may have focused elsewhere, and maybe some may have been able to step back a little further to see a larger section, but we all "see in part and know in part" and through our mortal eyes "look through a glass darkly."[18] The day will come when the light will shine in those dark places and our minds will be illuminated, but until that time we can often see more and understand more by trying to focus together as a people.

17 Acts 14:15; James 5:17.
18 1 Corinthians 13:12.

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel



"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."

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Joseph Smith's Teachings on
Adam, Our First Father – *Part 1*

"If you were to ask Joseph [Smith] what sort of a looking man Adam was;" he "would tell you at once; he would tell you his size and appearance and all about him."[1] recollected Church President, John Taylor. To those who believe Joseph Smith saw Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, the Apostle Peter, Moses, and Elijah[2] it perhaps comes as no surprise that the Prophet Joseph had also met Adam, the father of the human race.

Not only had he seen Adam, but his contemporaries also relate that he was very much acquainted with aspects of his life that we do not have in the current Bible. It seems that "so great was his strength" and speed that he could "outstrip" wild animals and catch them.[3] From those who knew the Prophet we also learn that he "said that Eve had twenty-eight sons and twenty-eight daughters, and that Adam had many wives."[4]

Whilst the world looked upon Adam as a sinful man, the New Testament tells us "Adam was not deceived" and that it was not him who "was in the transgression,"[5] and the Prophet likewise proclaimed that "Adam did not commit sin in eating the fruits"[6] In fact the ancient Apocrypha tells us "Adam [was] above every living thing in the creation,"[7] and a revelation from the Lord in 1835 implies that Adam was perfect.[8]

It is sad that though the Ten Commandments tells us that you must "honor thy father,"[9] that so many in the Christian world so readily dishonor Adam, who is the father of us all.

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1 John Taylor, Journal of Discourses 18:326.
2 JS-H 1:17,72, D&C 110:2,11,13
3 John L. Lytle, Journal of Charles L. Walker, p. 39, 16 April 1882. See Journal of Oliver B. Huntington, p. 207.
4 William W. Phelps attested to remembering this, after which Brigham Young confirmed its truthfulness. - James Beck Journal (Notebook) 1859-1865, 8 October 1861. H.W. Naisbitt also testified to Joseph Smith teaching that Adam had more than one wife. - Journal of Discourses 26:115-116
5 1 Timothy 2:14
6 McIntyre minute book, 9 February 1841, Words of Joseph Smith, p. 63.
7 Ecclesiasticus 49:16, see 2 Esdras 6:54.
8 D&C 107:43 tells us that Seth "was a perfect man" and that he was "like unto his father in all things." Therefore if Seth was perfect and like Adam in all things, then Adam must have been perfect to.
9 Exodus 20:12

Adam – his PreMortal Roles

Adam's role did not begin on this earth though, the Lord revealed to the Prophet that Adam was Michael,[10] the archangel[11] who, with "his angels fought against the dragon," Satan, in the war in heaven.[12] Fortunately for us Adam won that conflict,[13] but the war is still ongoing, and he as Michael will yet win what the scriptures call "the battle of the great God" and "the devil and his armies shall be cast away ... that they shall not have power over the saints any more at all."[14]

We sometimes forgot that one being can fulfill many roles and responsibilities, and go by many names. The Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith even teaches that Adam, before he came to earth, took precedence over Jesus Christ in the hierarchy of the Priesthood: It was Adam to whom "the priesthood was first given"[15] even " before the world was formed",[16] and it was he who was "the first to hold the spiritual blessings."[17] "The keys of salvation"[18] for the whole universe[19] "were first given to Adam."[20] He holds the presidency of all dispensations,[21] and whenever "the keys ... are revealed from heaven" it is "by Adam's authority"[22] It is also Adam who "watches over [the] ordinances [and] reveals them from heaven,"[23] and who will one day "sound his trump, and then shall all the dead awake, for their graves shall be opened, and they shall come forth."[24]

Although plainly taught during his lifetime, these teachings have often been overlooked. Yet this was not all that Joseph knew about Adam. To his closest associates he revealed much more.

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10 "Michael, or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all" - D&C 27:11.
11 "before the earth shall pass away, Michael, mine archangel, shall sound his trump, and then shall all the dead awake, for their graves shall be opened, and they shall come forth" - D&C 29:26.
12 Revelations 12:7.
13 "the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, ... and his angels were cast out with him." - Revelations 12:8-9.
14 D&C 88:114.
15 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 157.
16 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 157, see Words of Joseph Smith, p. 8.
17 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 167, see Words of Joseph Smith, p. 39.
18 "Michael - given unto him the keys of salvation" - D&C 78:16.
19 "Adam delivers up his stewardship - which was delivered to him as holding the keys of the universe, but retains his standing as head of the human family." - Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 157.
20 "He (Adam) is the head, ... The keys were first given to him, and by him to others." - Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 158, see Words of Joseph Smith, p. 9.
21 "every man holding the Presidency of his dispensation, and one man holding the Presidency of them all, even Adam" - Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 169, see Words of Joseph Smith, p. 40.
22 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 157, see Words of Joseph Smith, p. 8.
23 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 168, see Words of Joseph Smith, p. 39.
24 D&C 29:26.

Zebedee Coltrin related how he, Sidney Rigdon and Oliver Cowdery went with the Prophet Joseph to a secluded "place where there was some beautiful grass and grape vines." He said to the brethren who were with him, "Let us pray, [and] they all prayed in turn. ... Brother Joseph then said, 'Now brethren, we will see some visions.' [Then] Joseph lay down on the ground on his back and stretched out his arms and the two brethren lay on them."[25] They "shut their eyes [and] after they had prayed he told them to open their eyes. They did so and saw a brilliant light."

"The heavens gradually opened, and they saw a golden throne, on a circular foundation, something like a light house, and on the throne were two aged personages, having white hair, and clothed in white garments. They were the two most beautiful specimens of mankind he ever saw. Joseph Said, 'They are our first parents, Adam and Eve.' Adam was a large broad shouldered man, and Eve as a woman, was as large in proportion."[26]

Apparently Heber C. Kimball, who was one of Joseph's most trusted associates, either shared this vision or remembered additional details from those who related it to him, as he spoke of the "vision that Joseph Smith had, when he saw Adam open the gate of the Celestial city and admit the people one by one. He then saw Father Adam conduct them to the throne one by one, when they were crowned Kings and Priests of God."[27]

It may seem strange to some that Adam would be opening the gate to the celestial kingdom and sitting upon a throne there. These events may seem very mysterious indeed, and yet Joseph saw it as part of his mission to reveal the mysteries of God to those prepared to receive them,[28] and those who knew him – when they were beyond the persecuting mobs and settled in the safety of early Utah – began to feel able to relate and record more openly what had only spoken about in secret before.

Adam as an Immortal Being

To his dear friend Anson Call he related that Adam "came here from another planet - an immortalized being and brought his wife Eve with him - and by eating of the fruit of the earth, became subject to death and decay - was made mortal and subject to death."[29]

This opens our field of understanding much more widely. If Adam and Eve were already immortalized beings who came from

25 Journal of Abraham H. Cannon, 25 August 1890.
26 Salt Lake School of the Prophets minute book, 11 October 1883.
27 Heber C. Kimball, 17 March 1861, Journal of Discourses 9:41.
28 "It has always been my province to dig up hidden mysteries – new things – for my hearers." - Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith 364.
29 Joseph Smith to Anson Call, John M. Whitaker Papers.

another planet, then they must have been though mortal lives already (upon another earth) and had been resurrected.[30] It would also seem that the eating of the temporal fruits of this earth enabled them to dwell here as mortals would.[31] Before coming to earth, as resurrected beings, they would have only been able to produce spiritual children,[32] but taking upon them aspects of mortality they were able to start mortal life upon the earth.

Some have supposed that Adam was literally created from the dust of this earth, although the scriptures tell us that "all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again."[33] Yet we had mothers who conceived, carried and gave birth to us through natural means. The Genesis account is undoubtedly figurative, for if we were to believe such verses literally then we would have to believe as Isaiah says that each of us were "hewn" from a "rock," and "digged" from a "pit"[34]

Moses, author of Genesis, himself recounts how God said that each plant yielded seed, just as each animal brought forth life "after his kind."[35] As the Prophet explained, "it is a decree of the Lord that every tree, plant, and herb bearing seed should bring forth of its kind, and cannot come forth after any other law or principle."[36] He illustrated this with a question: "Whenever did a tree or anything spring into existence without a progenitor?"[37] We observe the rule of procreation around us, in nature and by our own existence and that of our children. God works through natural laws, and the natural means of creating life is procreation, and Joseph Smith taught us that "everything comes in this way."[38]

30 "God must deliver up the spirits of the righteous, and the grave deliver up the body of the righteous; and the spirit and the body is restored to itself again, and all men become incorruptible, and immortal." - 2 Nephi 9:13.

31 Brigham Young spoke of the need for Adam and Eve to "eat and drink of the fruits of the corporeal world, until this grosser matter is diffused sufficiently through their celestial bodies to enable them, according to the established laws, to produce mortal tabernacles for their spiritual children." - Journal of Discourses 6:275.

32 "that which is born of spirit is spirit" - John 3:6 (note: a resurrected body is called "a spiritual body" - D&C 88:27-28.

33 Ecclesiastes 3:20, see Mosiah 2:25.

34 Isaiah 51:5.

35 Genesis 11-12,21-25, see Luke 6:44.

36 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 198.

37 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 373.

38 Ibid.

Adam – Father of the Human Race

This raised a question in Joseph's mind, which he shared with John Taylor: If "Adam is the Father of our bodies. Who is to say He is not the Father of our spirits?"[39] Could Adam and Eve in their immortal states have brought forth our spirits before taking on the role of providing those spirits with earthly bodies?

Nephi, in the Book of Mormon, speaks of Adam and Eve as being "our first parents."[40] Abraham calls Adam our "first father",[41] and Joseph taught that he was the "head of the human family"[42] and "the first and oldest of all, the great, grand progenitor ... because he was the first and father of all."[43]

This being the case raises an obvious question – "if Adam is the father of our Spirits, then is he our heavenly Father?" What else could we call him? If God is the Father of our spirits,[44] and he came to earth as Adam, then that makes him the Father of our bodies too. He didn't leave the responsibility to anyone else. How could he? How could we have become like God if we were not his children spiritually and literally?

Joseph hinted at this in public when he told the Saints, "The Father called all spirits before Him at the creation of man, and organized them. He (Adam) is the head, and was told to multiply."[45] As his friend Patriarch Benjamin F. Johnson realized, the Prophet Joseph was teaching "that God was the great head of human procreation - was truly the Father of both our spirits and our bodies."[46] And therefore had come to earth in the role of Adam.

Brother Joseph's greatest disciple and successor, Brigham Young heard this doctrine from him firsthand and taught it himself publicly on many occasions, said he, "It was Joseph's doctrine that Adam was God ... God comes to earth and partakes of the fruit. Joseph could not reveal [to the Church] what was revealed to him. "[47]

This explains what Joseph Smith had in mind when he said, "Everlasting covenant was made between three personages before the organization of this earth, and relates to their dispensation of things to men on the earth; these personages, according to Abraham's record, are called God the first, the Creator; God the Second, the Redeemer; and

39 John Taylor, 13 January 1880, L. John Nuttall Papers.
40 1 Nephi 5:11, see 2 Nephi 9:9.
41 Abraham 1:3.
42 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 157, Words of Joseph Smith, p. 9.
43 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 167, Words of Joseph Smith, p. 39.
44 "God of the spirits of all flesh" - Numbers 16:22; "the Father of spirits" - Hebrews 12:9
45 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 158, Words of Joseph Smith, p. 9.
46 Benjamin F. Johnson, October 1903, Letter to G.S. Gibbs.
47 Brigham Young Papers, Meeting of Quorum of Twelve, 4 April 1860.

God the Third, the witness or testator."[48] God the first, our heavenly Father, had the first dispensation on earth, as Adam, and His Son, the Redeemer, came in the meridian of time as Jesus.

However, this knowledge raises many more questions. Fortunately we have not been left without answers on any of them. We will look at some of these in the next issue.

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48 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 190.

The Lost Concepts of the Aaronic Endowment & Sealings For Time

To Latter-day Saints the Endowment is an important ceremony, associated with holy ordinances and sacred covenants. It leads them symbolically through the earthly life of this world to the presence of God. It is part of the process of sanctifying the lives of those who take part, and puts them under responsibilities to serve God and His kingdom as moral and accountable stewards. It is an essential passage on the path towards godhood, and offers the highest of blessings to those who take its obligations seriously.

The prophets of this dispensation have always feared this holy rite being taken lightly. During the last couple years of his life Joseph Smith limited those receiving it to the most trusted of his associates. As the conditions in which it was performed were rudimentary, Joseph was saddened that it could not be fully carried out in the way God had intended it. He told Brigham Young though that although it was "not arranged perfectly; however, we have done the best we could under the circumstances," and he instructed him to "take this matter in hand."[1]

Following Joseph's death the Saint's in Nauvoo were in a precarious position. There was no shortage of "tares among the wheat" trying to claim leadership, and no end of wolves waiting to pounce on the flock of Mormons. Yet President Young was determined that the temple would be finished before they would move on, so that all those worthy might have time to receive their Endowments.

Once the Saints settled in the Salt Lake Valley one of the first things that Brigham Young did was mark out the spot where the Lord's house would be built. He was determined that the ordinances restored through Joseph Smith would carry on, and even as it and other temples were begun an Endowment house was built to ensure the Saints could receive everything necessary to their exaltation.

During this time there arose a generation of Saints who "knew not Joseph"[2] in their lifetimes, and although their parents made great sacrifices and experienced extreem persecution from living the Gospel, some of the up and coming generation perhaps found it harder to see the importance of the principles their parents had embraced. This must have been a worry upon the mind of Brother Brigham, who often gave sermons during this time about his worries that the Saints were adopting Gentile ways.

As being ordained to the Melchizedek priesthood and going 'through' the Endowment precedes being sealed in marriage, it has sometimes been the case that the focus of those getting married has been

1 L. John Nuttall Journal, 7th February 1877.
2 Exodus 1:8.

on being wed and not on the ordination, ceremony and covenants they make before that. This was a challenge in Brigham Young's day as much as it is today, and one which also worried his successor, John Taylor.

At a meeting of the First Presidency and the Twelve in 1883, President Taylor shared some of his feelings on this: "I have had serious misgivings about conferring all the blessings and powers of the Priesthood as we do in our Endowments at the present time, upon everybody indiscriminately, that is that is recommended to as worthy by men sometimes, who are unworthy and who do not comprehend their position; I say I have serious misgivings as to whether it is proper to confer these blessings on so great a number of people who do not seem to comprehend them and who are not prepared to carry them out."[3]

Brother John Taylor did have some ideas though as to how the situation might be remedied: He proposed that "if our Endowments could only be given in part instead of as a whole, it would be much better and much safer, and we should thus avoid placing upon the heads of the incompetent people that which they are not prepared to receive and which they seldom live up to." He added that as "many people have entered into this marriage covenant and taken upon themselves responsibilities that have brought a curse and destruction upon them," therefore it might be better to "allow people to undergo a probationary state until they be considered worthy to enter into this everlasting covenant."[4]

This was a subject of special interest to President George Q. Cannon, and he had some personal experience in this area, as years earlier when he had returned from his mission to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) he had asked President Young "if he would perform the ceremony," to which Brigham Young replied, "I shall only marry you for time."[5] He also recalled how the Brother Brigham "very strongly urged that there should be a division in the Endowments."[6]

This was not just the subject of private conversation, however, as Brigham Young publicly spoke of this subject whilst he was alive. In a discourse given in 1864, he wondered at the fact that "when we give the brethren their endowments, we are obliged to confer upon them the Melchisedec Priesthood;" "But," he predicted, "I expect to see the day when we shall be so situated that we can say to a company of brethren you can go and receive the ordinances pertaining to the Aaronic order of the Priesthood, and then you can go into the world and preach the Gospel, or do something that will prove whether you will honor that Priesthood before you receive more. Now we pass through the ordinances of both Priesthoods in one day [in the Endowment], but this

3 Minutes of a Meeting of the First Presidency and Twelve, 2nd August, 1883.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 Ibid.

is not as it should be ..."[7]

By the time the St. George Temple was completed, Apostle Erastus Snow was still anticipating this taking place. He commented at the time that, "we will give [the] Endowment for each Priesthood separate, and after a while when Temples is built we will give [the] Endowment to each according to what Priesthood they hold; then we will give men the Endowment of the Aaronic Priesthood and nothing else."[8]

To Brigham Young the solution seemed plain. The Endowment is made up of two parts – the Aaronic and Melchizedek. It seems he anticipated a day when a man might have the Aaronic Priesthood, receive the Aaronic endowment, and - like George Q Cannon – be sealed for time at first. Then after they had proved themselves they would later receive the Melchizedek priesthood, the Melchizedek endowment, and be sealed for eternity."

President Young's instructions were carried out at least for a while as we know from the testimony of David H. Cannon, who later wrote that "at that time it was thought that the endowment was to be administered in two degrees, the first degree to include the Aaronic Priesthood only ..."[9]

How long this continued for, or when it may have been forgotten amidst the persecutions which began to increase around that period is unknown. But we do know that it was very much upon the minds of the Apostles in John Taylor's era, and as late as 1894 President George Q. Cannon was still trying to revive this idea:

> "Young people go there stupid, with no particular desire only to get married, without realizing the character of the obligations that they take upon themselves, or the covenants that they make, and the promises involved in the taking of these covenants. The result is, hundreds among us go to the House of the Lord and receive these blessings and come away without having any particular impression made upon them. I think that this is deplorable. When men have gifts and blessings bestowed upon them and they do not value them, they become a cause of condemnation rather than blessing.
>
> ... instead of it being necessary for a man to receive the Melchisedec Priesthood, he will first manifest his efficiency in the Aaronic Priesthood and show his capabilities and good desires before receiving the higher Priesthood. I firmly believe that this will be so some time, and that men will not get the fullness of the endowment with the ease that they have done, but

7 11th June 1864, Journal of Discourses 10:309.

8 As related by Lorenzo Snow, Jans Christian Anderson Weibe Journal, 9 July 1877.

9 David H. Cannon, referring to dedication of St. George Temple in 1877, David H. Cannon to George F. Richards, 18 July 1922.

will receive that part which belongs to the Aaronic Priesthood.

... I would rather - though I would not like it - a son of mine be married by a Bishop than to have him go to the Temple in an unfit condition and receive these blessings. It would be far better for him."[10]

However, it seems that the Church had begun to move in a different direction at that time which involved changing the Endowment to remove elements of obligation and responsibility so as not to condemn or worry the Saints too much. Thus the idea and practice of the separation of the Endowments and sealing for time in the way Brigham Young said "it should be" was lost.

Summary

- The Endowment is in two parts – the Aaronic & Melchizedek.
- It seems that these parts ideally should be separate.
- Perhaps most men should have the Aaronic Priesthood, receive the Aaronic endowment, and be sealed for time first.
- Any children conceived before receiving a sealing for eternity would have to be sealed into the family once the couple are sealed for eternity.[11]
- One day the 'splitting' of the Endowment will occur into these parts - "as it should be".

"I have felt, however, and have expressed by feelings in President Taylor's hearing that before long it would be necessary to give Endowments in the Lesser Priesthood in some such way as the matter suggested. But I feel in this there is a powerful helper, to inspire those who get the lesser Endowment only at a time to faithfulness so as to be counted worthy to get their further Endowments. This is a principle that exists in the Gospel ... It is natural, beginning with our little children, when we require something done in conformity with our will to hold the hope of receiving a reward; and I do believe that the time is near when the Lord will make it manifest to be the proper way to give a measure of the Endowments first, leading the people to obtain the spirit and power of that measure before the other endowments are conferred."

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10 Utah Stake Conference, 14 Jan 1894, Brain Stuy, Collected Discourses Vol. 4, p.12

11 See John Taylor, Minutes of a Meeting of the First Presidency and Twelve, 27th September, 1883.

Note: presumably women would also only initially receive the Aaronic part of the Endowment (and even as a plural wife only be sealed for time at first), and later receive these ordinances in full, just as the men

Franklin D. Richards, Minutes of a Meeting of the First Presidency and Twelve, 2nd August, 1883.

Before You Condemn Polygamy, Realize This

Polly Hammon[12]

Before you ask me to give up my lifestyle, show me that yours works. Show me that a monogamist marriage is sacred, that it works for at least a lifetime. Currently, more than 60 percent don't. Show me children who don't fret and worry about "if" and "when" their family will be torn apart.

Show me the strength and support of families. Show me homes filled with the wisdom of the aged, not institutions littered with the lonely and the heartbroken, or show me hallways of hospitals lined with family and friends to celebrate glad tidings or to walk with sorrows. Show me places of safety where I can educate my children, not schoolyards of the alienated and the abandoned. Show me children raised in the stability of family, not the sterility of daycare.

Show me heroes made of sterner stuff than what it takes to dunk a basketball or throw a touchdown. Show me the nightly news without a rundown on the latest from a society obsessed with who is cheating on whom or a marriage commitment that is measured in hours.

Show me women who are not yearning after an illusion created by Hollywood - who are not anxious about the natural progression of life, who don't fear that each change or wrinkle is a marker of possible abandonment. Show me a society so happy with its choices and fulfilled from living those choices that it hasn't medicated itself for depression and struggles with addiction.

Show me minds honed by principle and hearts enlarged by love. Show me that your society is willing to love more that its own - that children are not referred to as "stepchildren" or “accidents.” Show me children who are loved and nurtured from the moment of conception, instead of 40 million choices of murder.

Show me a society where motherhood is honored and a woman does not have do what it takes to be "picked" by a male more concerned with the façade of her face than the content of her character. Show me a society that does not abandon its daughters to a singles' ward with the futile admonition of "Be patient and fill your lives with other things."

Show me a society where religion provides an unalterable standard and Truth is not for sale or bartered for political expediency - where the words and life of the Savior and other wise men are not just glib recitations but the work of a life eager for the changes and growth wrought by their words upon the soul. Show me a religion that appeals to my intellect and provides the answers to the haunting questions of humanity:

12 She is a resident of Centennial Park, Arizona.

Why am I here? Where did I come from? Where am I going?

Show me a society that is willing to allow people the liberties and inalienable rights endowed by our Creator to worship Him at the dictates of our conscience - my conscience sees the works of Fathers Abraham, Jacob, and Moses -rather than a society that commands in the place of our freedoms the Romans' mandate of monogamy. Contrary to the efforts of some individuals today, neither man nor woman converts a belief at the sword point of compulsion.

Show me these things so that I may worry less about you and that I may know you have some of the joy I've known. As for the principles I strive to live by, I love how the living of them invites me to live on a higher plane. If I were to abandon them, how would I greet Mother Sarah or Father Abraham, the Prophet Joseph Smith and countless others? How can I betray my God?

Guest Editorial, 3rd March 2005, St. George Spectrum

A Married Messiah

As far as the millions of orthodox Jews in the world are concerned their Messiah has not yet come, and the popular Christian portrayal of Jesus seems very different to them from their expectations of what their Christ should be like. One glaring omission in what they would otherwise consider a perfect and exemplary life is the impression that Christ was celibate. Noted Rabbi, Emil Hirsch touched upon this subject in his book, My Religion: "Now as the life of Jesus is pictured in the New Testament, there are certain peculiar defects in that life from the Jewish point of view. His teachings are the ideal teachings of Judaism; they are not new teachings, nor new revelations. They are confirmations of Jewish thought and life. But his personal life - I am speaking respectfully; I do not think anyone should think I cast any shadow on the beauty and perfection of that life, but I can take it as it is pictured - you know he was not married, and from the Jewish point of view, that is a defect. The Jewish morality insists that a man who does not assume the social responsibility for the continuation of society, lives a life that is not complete."[1]

Having assumed that Jesus was single many have been led to the conclusion that marriage was considered by him to be less than the holy institution Jews have always held it in regard as, and have supposed perhaps that he even encouraged celibacy by such an example. Yet the writers of the Gospels leave us in no doubt as to Jesus' views on the matter, and record him as having quoted from the first book of Moses, Genesis, on marriage being part of God's plan for man and woman upon the earth: "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."[2]

The disciples took the counsel of their beloved prophet and leader seriously, and the New Testament speaks of many of them being married, amongst their number being Peter, John the beloved, Paul and others[3]. In fact, having a spouse was a requirement for fulfilling the responsible stations of Bishop and Deacon[4]. Church father, Clement of Alexandria wrote in the second century that all of the apostle were married, and Eusebius includes Paul amongst them in his list. Doubtless early Church leaders were expected to be an example in this matter.

1 My Religion, Rabbi Emil Hirsch, p. 43-44,1925 ed.
2 Matthew 19:4-6, Mark 9:6-9, see Genesis 2:23-24
3 Matthew 8:14, 2 John 1,13, 1 Corinthians 9:5
4 1 Timothy 3:2,12

Which brings us to the question of why does it seem from a cursory overview of his life that Jesus omitted the first commandment God ever gave, that of marriage and the bringing of children into the world?

To begin to answer that question we must first admit that the Gospels are only a partial record of all that Jesus said during his sojourn on earth. John the apostle who faithfully followed Jesus during his earthly ministry and probably knew him as well as any man could, remarked that, "there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written."[5] Because a Jewish man being unmarried at the age of Jesus would have been so unusual during the time in which Jesus lived, and because the New Testament does not explicitly say that he had no wife, some have suggested that this itself may be evidence that he was indeed married, otherwise the scriptures would have mentioned that he wasn't and why. As the Rev. Dr. William Phipps, a professor of theology, argued, "If Jesus had been a bachelor ... the Bible would surely contain some record of his being criticized for it."[6]

Beyond the speculation though, what evidence do we have of either the celibate or married Christ? And why cant Jews accept that the Messiah could be excluded from the commandment to wed? To the Jews, their human Saviour, would be an embodiment of the laws of God, he would typify them rather than being exempt from them. Just as Jesus was baptized "to fulfill all righteousness", and said that he had not "come to destroy," the law, "but to fulfil" it[7]. They also expected a married Messiah, because the prophets of their Tanach (the Hebrew Bible) predicted his marital state as a feature of his life: In speaking of Israel's expectant deliverer in a passage Paul identifies as referring to Jesus, David wrote, "Kings daughters were among thy honourable women", or *wives* as the 1599 version of the Geneva Bible, and a 1636 Church of England Bible puts it[8]. Of him having children, Isaiah predicts, "he shall see his seed", and asks, "Who shall declare his generation?"[9]

Some Christian readers may be troubled by the implication of David's prophesy of the Messiah having several "honorable wives," as one of the features of pagan Roman religion that remained after its adoption of Christianity was that of monogamy, and the laws restricting one woman to one man. The Old Testament however contains many examples of righteous prophets who lived in such manner, such as Abraham, Jacob, Moses, and David. The father of the Protestant movement, Martin Luther, declared that "for a man to have two wives at

5 John 21:25
6 Journal of Ecumenical Studies, Spring 1969, see also Newsweek, 24 March 1969
7 Matthew 3:15, 5:17
8 Psalms 45:6, see Hebrews 1:8
9 Isaiah 53:8, see Luke 23:27-28 & Isaiah 53:10, see Acts 8:33 and Hebrews 2:16

once" was not "contrary to the divine law" and himself authorized a nobleman (Philip the Landgrave of Hesse) to marry a second wife, and is recorded as stating, "The Gospel hath neither recalled nor forbid what was permitted in the law of Moses with respect to marriage."[10]

Of course other interpretations have been made of references to Jesus in the role of father, husband, and some have supposed the Church was his symbolic bride, and that its members are his 'children', as he is the 'father' of their salvation. Indeed, the Catholic Church marries it's Nuns to Jesus, representing their lifelong commitment to him. Whilst such concepts have great meaning to those who believe in them, they neither rule out the possibility of Jesus being married nor explain every passage in the Old and New Testaments that seem to suggest he was. In fact, it is the four Gospels themselves that may hold the answers to whether, when, where, and who Jesus married.

Whether Jesus was married: In addition to all the indications already given, it is interesting to note that Jesus was referred to by a title only given to married teachers, that of Rabbi. Even his detractors had no qualms about referring to him as such, and allowed him to preach in the synagogue, a practice also limited to married men[11].

When Jesus was married: John in the second chapter of his book speaks of a wedding at which not only Jesus was present, but also his mother, who would have had to have traveled all the way from Nazareth especially to be there. At this event Jesus was in charge of the wine, a duty usually set aside for the groom, and if this does not make it obvious enough that it was his own wedding he was present at, we have in the sacred record that he was referred to as the bridegroom on this occasion[12].

Who Jesus married: The association Jesus had with certain women would have been wholly inappropriate for a single man, but perfectly normal and accepted for a husband[13]. In the Greek language there is little distinction between the word woman and wife, and so therefore any (if not all) of those females who accompanied him quite possibly could have been married to him. Martha called him "Master", a title a wife would use to address her husband, and when Mary her sister was in mourning over the death of their brother, Lazarus, she sat in her home until Jesus called her out, just as was the custom that only a husband could call a woman out of her home at such a time[14]. Not only did Christ fulfill the traditions and duties of a typical Jewish husband, but so did his wives, when they anointed him prior to his burial[15].

Ancient historians, apocryphal writings, and archeological finds

10 Thelyphthora 1:212, Rev. Martin Madan
11 John 1:38,49, 3:2, 6:25, 20:16
12 John 2:1-10
13 Matt. 27:55, Mark 15:40-41, Luke 23:27-28
14 John 11:28
15 Luke 24:1,10

all confirm the evidence found in the scriptures and understood in light of early Jewish traditions: One of the earliest references to Jesus by a non-Christian was that of Aurelius Cornelius Celsus, a Philosopher and Physician, who lived until AD 38, who recorded that, "The grand reason why the gentiles and philosophers of his school persecuted Jesus Christ was because he had so many wives; there were Elizabeth and Mary and a host of others that followed him." The Gospel of Philip, a volume from the ancient Nag Hammadi library, reads, "And the consort of Christ is Mary Magdalene. The Lord loved Mary more than all the disciples, and kissed her on her mouth often."[16] Finally, in 1873 M. Clermont Gannaeu discovered near the village of Bethany early Christian graves, the tombstones of which bore the names of persons mentioned in the Gospels, including Martha (considered to be one of Jesus' wives). Among them was "Simeon, the son of Jesus". Who was quite possibly the second Bishop of Jerusalem and President of the Church until his death in 106 AD.[17] What more evidence does the world need to accept that Jesus was indeed the married Messiah?

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16 Translated by R. McL. Wilson, B.D., Ph.D.

17 Dr. M. Zvi Udley, Th.M, Ph.D

Jesus Was Married!

Latter-day Apostles and Prophets Testify.

I have been quite surprised to find that my recent article, “The Married Messiah”, has proved to be so controversial, especially to another Latter-day Saint. My treatment of the subject was but a summary of some of the scriptural and cultural arguments for Jesus having been married, as have occasionally appeared in popular Mormon publications. Yet I find myself honored that it proved to be of such interest, that someone felt it warranted a response. The arguments against the evidences I presented are well written, and pointed out weaknesses in the reasoning used and alternative interpretations, that I perhaps should have noticed before the final version was published. No doubt those who might read such different treatments of the subject, will find themselves provoked to further personal study, which I'm sure is the goal of those who stand on both sides of this issue.

Despite the shortcomings in my original article, however, I feel there are still many arguments of merit within its pages, and that there are evidences which it did not cover, which further testify to the fact Jesus was married. As to what makes me consider it to be a fact, and what some of those other evidences are, I will attempt to outline in this response. To begin with, it seems to me that this critical treatise of my position failed to address adequately several fundamental issues I brought up. Most importantly missing was an in-depth treatment of the prophecies of the Messiah's wives and progeny, and the necessity of Jesus keeping the commandments as part of his mission and in line with the perfection we attribute to him.

You suggest Jesus may have been a unique exception to the law of marriage, and yet he was not similarly excused from baptism, when it seems - he being perfect - he had less need to be baptized. Yet Jesus set an example, and he symbolized his own death, burial and resurrection also. Then wouldn't it be just as appropriate for him - if indeed he was exempt from needing to be married in mortality - for him to do so at least as an example of one of the most crowning ordinances and eternal laws of his Father in heaven, and as a symbol of the `marriage of the lamb' and the wedding of the `bridegroom' that are spoken so much of in the New Testament? As an early missionary Elder put it better than I:

> “A certain angel, spoken of in the Revelation of St. John, willing to gratify curiosity upon this same interesting subject says to one, ‘Come hither, and I will show the Bride, the Lamb's wife, to the inquisitive person who wanted to know about the wife of Christ.’ Again, John the Revelator says, most distinctly, that the Lamb's wife hath made herself ready, and blessed are

> those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Now, if the Lord has in very deed shown unto men in the flesh, the very Bride, and wife of Christ, and also the nuptial celebration, then an honest mind may be at rest upon this subject."[18]

Indeed one may question whether Jesus would of remained 'perfect' had he not kept all the commandments as he far as he had an appropriate opportunity to do so. There is another issue also, if having a wife or wives was a mandate for holding office in the Church (as is suggested by Paul? at least in the case of Bishop) then would Jesus have qualified for his own calling had he not entered into a marriage covenant? Jesus, as we know, was endowed (possibly upon the mount of transfiguration), and the endowment ceremony - those who have gone through will recognise - has only a partial relevancy to those who are single, and the covenants and blessings only find their complete fulfilment through Celestial Marriage. Although Jesus was unique in nature and in his role, yet I have seen little evidence that this would make him exempt from the requirements for exaltation which we all must fulfil. President Joseph F. Smith felt similarly that the Saviour was not absolved from any such responsibility:

> "Jesus Christ never omitted the fulfilment of a single law that God had made known for the salvation of the children of men. It would not have done for him to have come and obeyed one law and neglected or rejected another. He could not do that and then say to mankind, `Follow me!"[19]

You may be interested to learn that all the scriptures I utilized in the Married Messiah article were not taken from "the side-line sniper school" of anti-Christian studies, nor from theologians as such, but primarily from Church Presidents and Apostles, who once spoke more freely about subjects such as these in General Conference, and in early LDS periodicals.

Joseph Smith in fact stated that "Mary and Martha manifested a much closer relationship [with Jesus] than merely a believer"[20], later explicitly naming Mary Magdalane as his wife. The Prophet did not surmise that Jesus `must have been married,' but through the unique insight and inspiration that came with his calling could proclaim Jesus was indeed wed.

At least four other Church Presidents spoke in similar terms, namely Brigham Young[21], Lorenzo Snow, Joseph F. Smith and his son. Orson Hyde, whom is the only LDS proponent you mention in your

18 Orson Spencer's Letters, p. 224-226
19 Joseph F. Smith, Millennial Star 62:97
20 Journal of Wilford Woodruff, July 22, 1883
21 J.D. 13:309, quoting Isaiah 6:1 as evidence

reply, was not alone amongst the Apostles in his belief, being joined in his convictions by George Q. Cannon, Heber C. Kimball, Orson Pratt, Jebediah Grant, and doubtless others who have escaped my attention. They taught it not as a personal theory, but as a Gospel verity, and proclaimed it from the pulpit in General Conference and other public meetings.

They gave many explanations as to how they had all reached such a conclusion, but ultimately had a special insight that come through their prophetic calling, and a certain relationship with the Saviour that left them in little doubt as to his marital status. Leaving aside the scriptural arguments they propounded, which were covered in my previous article, there were other reasons they gave to the Saints as to why Jesus must have been wed. For example, they looked upon the close association Christ had with the women who followed and served him, and suggested that such an affinity would be entirely improper between an unmarried man and woman:

> "It will be borne in mind that once on a time, there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and on a careful reading of that transaction, it will be discovered that no less a person than Jesus Christ was married on that occasion. If he was never married, his intimacy with Mary and Martha and the other Mary also whom Jesus loved, must have been highly unbecoming and improper to say the best of it.
>
> I will venture to say that if Jesus Christ were now to pass through the most pious countries in Christendom with a train of women such as used to follow him, fondling about him, combing his hair, anointing him with precious ointment, washing his feet with tears, and wiping them with the hair of their heads and unmarried, or even married, he would be mobbed, tarred, and feathered, and rode not on an ass, but on a rail."[22]

> "One thing is certain, that there were several holy women that greatly loved Jesus - such as Mary, and Martha her sister, and Mary Magdalene; and Jesus greatly loved them, and associated with them much; and when He arose from the dead, instead of first showing Himself to His chosen witnesses, the Apostles, He appeared first to these women, or at least to one of them - namely, Mary Magdalene. Now, it would be very natural for a husband in the resurrection to appear first to his own dear wives, and afterwards show himself to his other friends. If all the acts of Jesus were written, we no doubt should learn that these beloved women were his wives."[23]

22 Orson Hyde, J.D. 4:259

23 Orson Pratt, The Seer, p. 159

He being married, we would expect him to have lived up to all of the God-given responsibilities that come with such a union, chief among these being the commandment to bring spirit children into the world through the means of procreation. Once again God's apostles and prophets proclaimed that this was not just a possibility that he might do so, but a necessity:

> "Did the Saviour of the world consider it to be his duty to fulfill all righteousness? You answer, yes. Even the simple ordinance of baptism he would not pass by, for the Lord commanded it, and therefore it was righteousness to obey what the Lord had commanded, and he would fulfill all righteousness. Upon this hypothesis I will go back to the beginning, and notice the commandment that was given to our first parents in the Garden of Eden. The Lord said unto them, "Multiply and replenish the earth. ..."
>
> ... Our first parents, then, were commanded to multiply and replenish the earth; and if the Saviour found it his duty to be baptized to fulfill all righteousness, a command of far less importance than that of multiplying his race, (if indeed there is any difference in the commandments of Jehovah, for they are all important, and all essential,) would he not find it his duty to join in with the rest of the faithful ones in replenishing the earth? ..."[24]

The offspring from such a union, being the children of a perfect being, would almost certainly be uniquely endowed with an inclination towards righteousness, and a rare degree of spiritual strength, not often seen amongst other mortals. What a loss it would be to the world if they were to go unrecognized, but this is not a danger us Latter-day Saints need fear of, for the early prophets and apostles of this dispensation declared - through use of their revelatory skills - that indeed, the sons of the Messiah did walk amongst the Saints. Joseph Smith being the first to reveal this truth, when he informed the plural wife of Elder Judge Adams, that the Apostle "was a literal descendant of Jesus Christ."[25]

Lorenzo Snow, and his counsellor George Q. Cannon, would also declare this truth more publicly:

> "President George Q. Cannon also spoke ... Among the other things, he said, "There are those in this audience who are descendants of the old Twelve Apostles - and shall I say it, yes, descendants of the Saviour Himself. His seed is represented in

24 Orson Hyde, J.D. 2:79, 80, 82

25 Oliver B. Huntington Journal, p. 259

this body of men.

Following Pres. Cannon, President Snow arose and said that what Bro. Cannon had stated respecting the literal descendants among this company of the old apostles and the Saviour himself is true - the Saviour's seed is represented in this body of men."[26]

Orson Hyde saw this as a fulfillment of prophecies of Jesus, he considered the seed of Jesus to be the most elect of chosen people of God, and gave his belief as to why the descendants of the Saviour has been so long hidden from the world:

> "We say it was Jesus Christ who was married, to be brought into the relation whereby he could see his seed, before He was crucified. "Has he indeed passed by the nature of angels, and taken upon himself the seed of Abraham, to die without leaving a seed to bear his name on the earth?" No. But when the secret is fully out, the seed of the blessed shall be gathered in, in the last days; and he who has not the blood of Abraham flowing in his veins, who has not one particle of the Saviour's in him, I am afraid is a stereotyped Gentile, who will be left out and not be gathered in the last days; for I tell you it is the chosen of God, the seed of the blessed, that shall be gathered. ...
>
> Well, then, he shall see his seed, and who shall declare his generation, for he was cut off from the earth? I shall say here, that before the Saviour died, he looked upon his own natural children, as we look upon ours; he saw his seed, and immediately afterwards he was cut off from the earth; but who shall declare his generation? They had no father to hold them in honourable remembrance; they passed into the shades of obscurity, never to be exposed to mortal eye as the seed of the blessed one. For no doubt had they been exposed to the eye of the world, those infants might have shared the same fate as the children in Jerusalem in the days of Herod, when all the children were ordered to be slain under such an age, with the hopes of slaying the infant Saviour."[27]

Just as Joseph Smith said shortly before his death, "you do not know who I am!", President Heber C. Kimball said the same thing could be said of Brigham Young and his apostles, as they all shared a common history and identity that the world at large was unaware of:

"Are you ever going to be prepared to see God, Jesus Christ, His

26 Journal of Pres. Rudger Clawson, pp. 374-375
27 Orson Hyde, J.D. 2:82-83

> angels, or comprehend His servants, unless you take a faithful and prayerful course? Did you actually know Joseph Smith? No. Do you know Brother Brigham? No. Do you know Brother Heber? No, you do not. Do you know the Twelve? You do not; if you did, you would begin to know God, and learn that those men who are chosen to direct and counsel you are near kindred to God and Jesus Christ, for the keys, power, and authority of the kingdom of God are in that lineage."[28]

Brother Heber's lineage was also evident to others, such as Elder Orson F. Whitney, who saw the effects of the blood that ran through the veins of this righteous man who had never faltered:

> "There was divine harmony in all this. In Heber, his character, manner and methods - we say it reverently--there was much of the Christ; the might of the lion, with the meekness of the lamb. His, also, was the Saviour's lineage; in his heart a kindred spirit, in his veins the self-same blood. Where causes are similar, should there not spring similar results?"[29]

Some may wonder as to why many biblical scholars may dismiss such a possibility, and as to why some Saints seem to reticent to embrace this doctrine. In answer to that question, Orson Hyde informs us, that those who so not possess a similarly divine background, and godly heritage, will often be the first to reject this teaching:

> "How much soever of holy horror this doctrine may excite in persons not impregnated with the blood of Christ, and whose minds are consequently dark and benighted, it may excite still more when they are told that if none of the natural blood of Christ flows in their veins, they are not the chosen or elect of God. Object not, therefore, too strongly against the marriage of Christ, but remember that in the last days, secret and hidden things must come to light, and that your life also (which is in the blood) is hid with Christ in God."[30]

Of my fellow Saints I ask the question, "With such understanding as has now been afforded us through the inspired sermons and writings of our Latter-day Apostles and Prophets, how could we too so easily reject such a sublime truth?" And Specifically addressing my following remarks to my scholarly friends, who might think it wiser not to advocate or speculate on that which they don't feel they can adequately

28 Heber C. Kimball, J.D. 4:248
29 Orson F. Whitney, Life of Heber C. Kimball, p. 185
30 Orson Hyde, J.D. 4:260

prove to their secular colleagues and to the rest of the Christian world: "Do not the imperfect arts of Biblical criticism and interpretation, and the limited evidences of anything that exists in ancient history, pale into insignificance next to the revelatory words of divinely called and commissioned authorities?"

Modesty – The Lord's Standard

We live in a world of bare midriffs, cleavage, mini-skirts, tiny shorts, and spaghetti straps, in which it seems hard for a young woman to find any other type of clothing, and in which it is common (and often expected) for young men to take off their shirts at sports activities.

Perhaps in the religious areas of America such as Utah there are some who cling to an ideal of modesty, but even here - as the Church has become more integrated with the world - we seem to eventually reflect much of the same fashions, if only a little later and a little less extreme.

In such a society as ours the word modesty has almost disappeared from most peoples understanding, if not their vocabularies. The world sometimes sees the word modest as synonymous with being boring, or even ugly. But the English word itself just means "measured" or balanced. It is all about having a balance in the way that we dress between what is practical, comfortable, as well as what it is appropriate for us to wear as representatives of God, being respectful of His standards.

Modesty is not just something your parents want you to have to keep down the cost of clothing, to cramp your style, or because they want you to be stuck in the past. Modesty is an expectation from God, as seen in the Epistle of the Apostle Paul to Timothy in which he advises "that women adorn themselves in modest apparel."[1]

Presumably Christian women in those days were tempted to follow fashion, just as much as many young women are today. Although they didn't have any branches of "Gap" or "Abercrombie & Finch" to buy their clothes in, they still had their own "costly array," extravagant hair styles, as well as "gold, or pearls" to draw attention to themselves.

One of the reasons young women are spoken about more often when it comes to this subject is because traditionally men have worn clothes which are practical, and shirts and trousers which cover their bodies have been the most sensible for most types of work, especially jobs taking place outside. Whereas womens clothes have been more creative and colorful. But much of what this article deals with applies to young men too, if only to let them know the standards the Lord may expect of the young women they associate with, and hope to court and marry one day.

Others Standards

Orthodox Jews take the issue of modesty very seriously. They have clear expectations of what is appropriate and inappropriate. In Hebrew

1 1 Timothy 2:9.

the words “tzniut” and “tsanua” represent modesty, they mean “restraint” and “reserve” in all areas - not just dress.

Many Jewish women see modesty as God's plan to have others focus on what is unique about them, such as their faces, and to be judged by their characters rather than their bodies and clothing. One such young woman, Wendy Shalit, wrote a book on the subject called “A Return to Modesty” which looked at how women had lost much of their respect (for themselves and from others) as their fashions have become more immodest.

The ancient Talmud which advises Jews in all matters of life sets a minimal standard for women of covered upper arms, thighs and knees, and wearing something upon the head. It tells the story of a woman by the name of Bas Kimchis, whose seven sons all became High Priests in the Temple in Jerusalem. When asked how she merited her children reaching such an exalted status, she said it was because she dressed with great modesty even in the private quarters of her house where nobody saw her.

It is not Jews alone who hold to such high standards, many Orthodox Christian women object to wearing pants and Muslim women also wear head scarfs and long dresses. The Amish, Hutterites, Bruderhof, Catholic and Buddhist monks and nuns, and other religious orders have specific expectations of what clothing is appropriate.

Whereas others may see them as Victorian or even prudish, such people of faith want the world to know that they have chosen these standards of their own free will, that they feel they are a blessing, and are proud to be identified because of their beliefs.

Modern fashionable clothing represents a set of values and beliefs too. Fashion designers try to make a statement with their clothing, whether it is to shock, or to undermine the Lord's standards. Those who sell their clothes are eager to capitalize on people wanting to follow a certain trend because that is how they make their money - they don't want you to be more free, they want you to be slaves to fashion because it benefits them. They get stars of TV, movies or sports to wear a particular item or style to make it more sought after and acceptable. Yet people argue they are more free because they follow others, or can choose from what Babylon has to offer, rather than the standards of a perfect God.

Some people wont buy anything unless it has the right ‘label.’ Perhaps there are some brands that have a reputation of quality and there may be times when it can be worth paying more for something like a shoe that will last longer, but no matter what the make is, a stain can wreck labeled clothing as easily as anything bought at a second hand store (such as the D.I.). It is amazing that people are so eager to be labeled themselves by wearing such clothing, and to be walking advertisements for companies, who they pay for the privilege.

A designer gown or Armani suit is beyond the budget of most of the youth, yet it is not unheard of for some of them to spend a great amount on one particular item of clothing for a dance or a special occasion, or to have some special hair, nail and beauty treatment. For some of the wealthy in the world - actors and models especially – such things are a common occurrence, but is it right in God's eyes – even for those who can afford it? Could we better spend our money?

This is an area of modesty often forgotten, but the Lord does not want inequalities between his people, with some in rags and others in robes. He instructed His Saints in 1831 through the Prophet Joseph Smith, that their "garments be plain."[2] and He has not changed His mind since.

Like charity, modesty "vaunteth not itself, … doth not behave itself unseemly."[3] Likewise, the Nephites in Alma's day, "did impart of their substance … to the poor, and the needy, and the sick, and the afflicted; and they did not wear costly apparel, yet they were neat and comely."[4]

Modesty will sometimes require creativity, especially for young women who may have to adjust or combine clothes. It is a chance for them to develop their own styles, and to be truly unique within the guidelines the Lord has set for clothing standards. To the Lord there is nothing more beautiful than when the Saints wear clothes they have made themselves, and "their beauty" is "the beauty of the work of" their "own hands." *(D&C 42:40)* As the great Greek orator Demades once said, "Modesty is the citadel of beauty."

This article will be continued in the next issue

2 D&C 42:40.
3 1 Corinthians 13:4–5.
4 Alma 1:27.

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel

"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."

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Joseph Smith's Teachings on
Adam, Our First Father – *Part 2*

Objections to Joseph's Teachings Answered

Some have wondered - "how could Adam be God when he was called an angel?" The first thing to remember is that he was no ordinary angel – he was the archangel, the head of the angels. Who else but God would be head of the angels?

Secondly, what does it mean to be an angel? The Doctrine and Covenants tells us that there are only "two kinds of beings in heaven, namely: Angels, who are resurrected personages, having bodies of flesh and bones" and spirits.[49] What category would God fit into?

Others raise an objection to the fact that Genesis seems to say that Adam "died."[50] However, the Bible also says that "Moses ... died,"[51] yet we know that although he became dead as to the things of the world, and as far as most of the world was concerned, yet in reality Alma tells us "the Lord took Moses unto Himself"[52] like Enoch who ascended into heaven.[53] No doubt the same could be said of Adam – he left his mortal life behind, and returned to his heavenly home.

Some wonder who Adam prayed to. Yet Jesus was considered a God but still prayed to his father. Joseph Smith taught that "God the Father ... had a father,"[54] so Adam would have prayed to his Father, or whoever was responsible for his godly role whilst he was upon the earth.

A few people have suggested that even though Adam was the Father of our spirits that it is his father whom we should be praying to. Yet the scriptures tell us the opposite, it is the Father of our Spirits who we should call our Heavenly Father and pray to,[55] that is who Jesus prayed to.

There have been questions about passages which suggest that Jesus is higher than Adam. However, just as an Apostle may serve as a missionary, so too could God – when he became Adam – take upon himself another responsibility, whilst not losing the higher one he ultimately holds. In this way there are areas in which the office of Jesus might be higher than the office of Adam, but as our Heavenly Father he

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49 D&C 129:1,3.
50 Genesis 5:5.
51 Deuteronomy 34:5.
52 Alma 45:19.
53 "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him." - Genesis 5:24, see Hebrews 11:5.
54 "If Jesus Christ was the Sons of God, and John discovered that God the Father of Jesus Christ had a Father, you may suppose that he had a Father also." - Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith p. 373.
55 "shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits" - Hebrews 12:9.

also held the highest office of all – as the Father of the Savior and God over all the earth.

It is interesting how Jesus is frequently called "the Son of Man."[56] Yet God is also called "Man – of holiness [and] counsel"[57] in the book of the Joseph Smith translation. It is even more revealing when we realize that the Hebrew word for man is "Adam."[58] As the Prophet put it (perhaps hinting to the Saints) "God [is] a man like one of us, even like Adam."[59]

Even if there were ways in which Jesus' responsibilities were greater than God's - whilst he was in the role of Adam upon the earth, or of Michael when leading the angels in battle – Joseph taught that it was Adam who presided over the keys of the universe and all dispensations[60] (which must have included the keys Jesus held), and he also revealed that it was through Adam that "Christ has been revealed, and will continue to be revealed."[61] Something we see illustrated on each occasion God has introduced Jesus with the words, "This is my beloved Son."[62]

A good question is "if God is Adam why isn't there any evidence of it within the scriptures?" To which there is a good answer "the evidence is there if you understand this doctrine and know where to look."

Adam as the Ancient of Days

We have already spoken of how Adam previously acted in the role of Michael and will at the commencement of the millennium "sound his trump, and then shall all the dead awake."[63] Whilst that revelation calls him Michael, Paul the Apostle of Jesus said it was "the Lord himself" who "shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise."[64]

In the book of Daniel the scriptures speak of one called the "Ancient of Days,"[65] who sits on a throne, surrounded by fire. That thousands would minister unto him, that he would open the books of

56 The term is used 84 times in the New Testament. See Luke 22:47 for one example.
57 JST Genesis 7:42.
58 See the KJV Old Testament Hebrew Lexicon.
59 Words of Joseph Smith, p. 361, Samuel W. Richards record, 7th April 1844.
60 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 157,169.
61 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 167, Words of Joseph Smith, 39.
62 Matthew 3:17,17:5, Mark 1:11;9:7, Luke 3:22; 9:35, 2 Peter 1:17, 3 Nephi 11:7, D&C 93:15, JS-H 1:17.
63 D&C 29:26.
64 1 Thessalonians 4:16, see D&C 43:18.
65 "the Ancient of days did sit, ... his throne [was like] the fiery flame," - Daniel 7:9.

judgement,[66] and the Son of Man would come to him[67] and be rewarded by him.[68]

It was revealed to the Prophet Joseph that the Ancient of Days was none other than Adam himself,[69] the most ancient of all beings upon the earth. There is another title however by which the Ancient of Days goes by, which is used by John the Beloved apostle in his vision which we call the book of Revelation. He also saw these same events: the same throne,[70] fire,[71] thousands ministering,[72] books of judgement,[73] Jesus coming to him[74] and being rewarded.[75] Yet John had a different name for the person on the throne - "the Almighty God."[76]

When Joseph Smith proclaimed Adam as the Ancient of Days, undoubtedly some of his audience knew what that implied. The religious reformers, leaders and scholars of their day and before knew who he was.

John Wesley, the father of Methodism, spoke of "God the king, and judge of all, called the Ancient of days, because of his eternal deity."[77] Likewise Matthew Henry's Bible commentary spoke of the "Judge" who was "the Ancient of days himself, God the Father," who was "called the Ancient of days, because he is God from everlasting to everlasting."[78]

Joseph plainly explained to the Saints that "all that have had the keys must stand before" Adam, and speaking of these events that "the Son of Man" (Jesus) would stand "before him, and there [be] given [by]

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66 "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him ... the judgment was set, and the books were opened." - Daniel 7:10.

67 "behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days" - Daniel 7:13.

68 "And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom" - Daniel 7:14.

69 "Adam shall come to visit his people, or the Ancient of Days shall sit, as spoken of by Daniel the prophet." - D&C 116:1, 27:11, 138:38.

70 " a throne was set in heaven" - Revelations 4:2.

71 "And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and [there were] seven lamps of fire burning before the throne" - Revelations 4:5.

72 "I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand" - Revelations 5:11.

73 "I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book" - Revelations 5:1.

74 "in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain," - Revelations 5:6.

75 "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." - Revelations 5:12.

76 "saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." - Revelations 4:8, see v. 11.

77 John Wesley's Explanatory Notes on the Whole Bible, 1754-65.

78 Matthew Henry Bible Commentary, 1706.

him glory and dominion."[79]

Elsewhere the Prophet refers to these same events again but instead of using the name Adam he simply calls him the Father. Says he, "Christ shall present the kingdom to the Father"[80] "that He may obtain kingdom upon kingdom, and it will exalt Him in glory."[81]

Brigham Young's teachings on Adam

Despite all these teachings of Joseph Smith it is Brigham Young who is better known for teaching this doctrine. It seems that Joseph realized that most of the Saints in his day wouldn't be prepared to receive this truth, and that it would be up to his successor to reveal it plainly to the people. According to one of the Saints who knew him, he prophesied that Brother Brigham would fulfill this mission upon first seeing him:

> "Upon seeing Brigham Young for the first time and while yet some distance away, the Prophet Joseph stopped his chopping on a beach log, straightened up, studied Brigham for a moment, then remarked; 'There comes the greatest man who ever lived to teach the identity of God to the world, and he will yet lead this people."[82]

Joseph subsequently taught Brigham the doctrine that it was "God" who "comes to earth, eats and partakes of the fruit"[83] perhaps as early as between 1835-37 at the home of Luke Johnson.[84] Young went on to lead the Saints – out of Illinois and to a knowledge of who their Father in heaven was. He gave many public sermons on the subject, including some in General Conference, and he attributed the knowledge he had received to Joseph Smith[85] and God himself.[86] Said he, "I could not find any man on earth who could tell me this, although it is one of the most simplest things in the world, until I met and talked with Joseph Smith."[87]

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79 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 157, Words of Joseph Smith, 9.
80 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 169.
81 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 347, Words of Joseph Smith, 358.
82 Diary of Charles L. Walker, p. 134. Speaking of their first meeting in September of 1832.
83 Minutes of Meeting at Historian's Office, 4th April 1860.
84 Although it may have been years later at Orson Hyde's home, Brigham says it was taught, "when in Luke Johnson's at Orson Hydes." Johnson was excommunicated in the Autumn of 1837.
85 Brigham Young Papers, Meeting of Quorum of Twelve, 4 April 1860 & 14 May 1876; 16 December 1876, Meeting of School of Prophets, Wilford Woodruff Journal; 18 June 1873, Deseret Weekly News 22:308.
86 25 April 1855, Deseret Theological Institute; 8 October 1861, B.Y. Addresses 4:138; 18 May 1873, JD 16:45-46; 18 June 1873, Deseret News.
87 18 June 1873, Deseret Weekly News 22:308.

Is this knowledge important?

Some question whether any of this is important for us to know, or if it is a mystery better left alone. Yet the Prophet tells us that far from being an unnecessary subject for us to study and understand, "it is" in fact "the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the Character of God."[88]

The Savior informed the disciples in his day that "this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God."[89] So without this knowledge our exaltation is insecure, but with these facts we begin to understand the "mystery of Godliness"[90]

With this knowledge we realize how close God actually is to us, how much he did to give us an opportunity to come to this world, and how well he understands our lives upon this earth. We also have an insight into what roles we may yet fulfill if we are worthy.

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88 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith p. 345.
89 John 17:3.
90 D&C 19:10.

The Last Prophecies of John Taylor

"I have saved my servant John Taylor for a wise purpose in me,"[1] revealed the Lord to Wilford Woodruff in 1880. Yet most of that decade the Church President spent his days in hiding from the government that was imprisoning those Latter-day Saints who lived the principle of Celestial Plural Marriage, and his life during that time remains a mystery to most Church members, who are unaware of the great purpose he was to fulfil. During his stay in the home of John W. Woolley in Centreville, Utah, he was visited by the resurrected Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith, who instructed him how to ensure that the Priesthood of God and its highest ordinances continued, no matter what persecution may come and notwithstanding the direction others Latter-day Saints might take. He called together his most faithful associates and laid this great responsibility upon them, with all the authority they would require to carry out God's work. After which, he foretold the future of those who had received this commission and those who would yet fulfill it, as well as the Church and the course it would take.[2]

Part One

The Saints had been warned repeatedly that their enemies wanted them to give up the law of Patriarchal Marriage, as President Charles Penrose told them, "What would be necessary to bring about the result nearest the hearts of the opponents of 'Mormonism'...? Simply to renounce, abrogate or apostatize from the new and everlasting covenant of marriage in its fullness."[3] However, the Gentile world was but a puppet for a more malevolent power: Satan himself, who personally was on a campaign to have the Church members relinquish their "most holy principle"[4]. As Brigham foresaw, "the powers of hell will do their utmost to get this people to give up that holy law which God designs to maintain."[5]

However, President Taylor's actions ensured that there would always be a group of righteous Latter-day Saints maintaining this principle, so that the Devil would be ultimately thwarted in his plans.

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1 Revelation to Wilford Woodruff, 26 January 1880, Unpublished Revelations 79:75.

2 27 September 1886, John W. Woolley Home, Centerville, Utah. As related by Lorin C. Woolley. (Woolley's 1929 affidavit serves as the primary source for the text of these prophecies (which appear in bold throughout). As this article illustrates, the prophecies were often repeated later by Apostles, and their fulfillment also serves to substantiate their authenticity.)

3 Deseret News, 23 April 1885 (1:377).

4 Recollection of William Clayton (Joseph Smith's secretary), Historical Record 6:225-7.

5 Mosiah Hancock Journal, Spring 1863.

Yet, he also foresaw that the majority of Saints would seek an easier road, even if it meant a lesser glory, as he prophesied, **"one half of this people will apostatize over the principle for which we are now in hiding, yea, and possibly one half of the other half."**[6] Sadly, this regrettable outcome was the only prophesy he would see fulfilled prior to his death.

On the last day of Jun 1887 a constitutional convention was held, the Gentiles having declined to participate, Mormon delegates from all the counties in the territory formulated a provision "prohibiting polygamy and making it a crime, with a severe penalty;" According to the Church's own newspaper just over a month later, on the first day of August (less than a week after the death of President Taylor), an election was held in which "95 per cent (13,000) of all the Mormon voters in the territory voted for the ratification of this convention."[7]

Why did they do it? Why did they replace a law of God with a law to make it a crime? The First Presidency themselves summed it up thus, "To be at peace with the government and in harmony with their fellow citizens who are not of their faith, and to share in the confidence of the Government and the people, our people have voluntarily put aside something which all their lives they have believed to be a sacred principle,"[8]

There was undoubtedly relief amongst the monogamous Mormons that they would no longer have to suffer because of their polygamous leaders and those few members that kept the practice, however, faithful Saints - such as Elder Kimball lamented that "...if there is any one thing that some people are glad and happy is done away with, it is that principle."[9] Of course, one wonders if such people will be as happy in the eternities having given up an essential requirement for their exaltation, for as Brother Brigham stated, "The only men who become Gods, even sons of God, are those who enter into polygamy."[10]

The Saints today are largely of the same attitude towards Celestial (plural) Marriage as most were just before the Manifesto, if not more so, as Professor David Bitton suggests, "Today probably no modern people is more anti-polygamy than the orthodox Mormons."[11] This was further shown by an opinion poll, on whether people should be allowed to live polygamously, in which it was found that, "... the greatest opposition to polygamy [was] among Mormons - 64.5 percent."[12] Not content with rejected the lifestyle themselves, it seems that the majority of members

6 Woolley affidavit, see fn. 2.
7 Deseret News, Aug. 30, 1890
8 19 December 1891, First Presidency Petition for Amnesty, Contributor 13:197; Smoot Investigation 1:18.
9 Deseret News, Mar. 1, 1902.
10 Journal of Discourses 11:268-9.
11 Journal of Mormon History 4:101, 1977.
12 Provo Daily Herald, 29 May 1977, p. 23.

would not want any one else to have that choice either.

Part Two

Such choices are not without consequence, however, and where a law of God is rejected by the majority of Church members, they cannot hope to receive the blessings attached to living such a law, and they allow the adversary to greater influence over their lives. One aspect of the law of Plural Marriage was that it minimized the temptation to commit adultery, offered to every woman the chance to marry, to have a greater degree of freedom to women (who shared responsibilities with their 'sister-wives'), and therefore eliminated many of the causes of children being born out of wedlock.

The outcome of relinquishing such a responsibility for a more worldly system of marriage has led to more worldly problems being prevalent amongst the Saints. This outcome was anticipated by President Taylor who warned, **"the day will come when a document similar to that (manifesto) then under consideration would be adopted by the Church, following which "apostasy and whoredom would be rampant in the Church."**[13] Another Church President, almost a hundred years later would state, in fulfillment of President Taylor's words, "the sin of adultery is running rampant through the Church."[14]

Sadly such problems began almost immediately after the turn of the century, as a son of President Heber C. Kimball related, "I remember very accurately what my father told this people in the old Bowery. Said he, 'You men and you women that lift up your voices against that holy principle (plural marriage) that has been introduced among this people, the time will come when your daughters will run these streets as common harlots, and you can't help yourselves.' I think some have been guilty of lifting up their voices, and if there is any one thing that some people are glad and happy it is done away with, it is that principle. I remember hearing another statement my father made: 'When you stand on the street corners of this great city and you cannot tell a Mormon from a Gentile, then look out for trouble.' Well, it has come. The trouble has not come to us in the way of tornadoes, or cyclones; but it has come to us and to our sons and daughters in the way of temptations."[15] Elder Matthias F. Cowley, also sadly admitted, "I want to say that that prediction, sorrowful though it may seem, has had its fulfillment."[16]

That such an attitude towards the principle as a great number of Saints had at the time constitutes their apostasy from the Gospel, is clear from the observation of President Heber C, Kimball, who lamented, "Many of this people have broken their covenants by finding fault with

13 Woolley affidavit, see fn. 2.
14 Harold B. Lee, Ensign 4:7:101.
15 Conference Report, Oct. 1901, p. 32.
16 Des. News, August 9, 1902.

the Plurality of Wives and trying to sink it out of existence."[17] In failing to defend their rights or uphold the right of the faithful who lived a higher law, such members were not only pleasing the government, but also the more malevolent power which inspired the persecution against the elect of God. In answer to the question of President Penrose of, "What would be necessary to bring about the result nearest the hearts of the opponents of 'Mormonism', more properly termed the Gospel of the Son of God? Simply to renounce, abrogate or apostatize from the new and everlasting covenant of marriage in its fullness."[18]

Part Three

The Lord made provision though that his sacred law would continue amongst those worthy to live it, that their children would be born in that holy covenant of Celestial (plural) Marriage, and that the authority would remain upon the earth until the return of Christ. He, Himself, said "I have not revoked this law, nor will I!"[19], and that the principle was to continue, is a truth all of the prophets from Brigham Young to Joseph F. Smith prophesied of:

> "For so God help us, we will never give up that holy law that noble prophets laid down their lives to maintain." *Brigham Young*[20]
>
> "It is an eternal part of our religion, and we will never relinquish it - We cannot withdraw or renounce it - He has promised to maintain it." *John Taylor*[21]
>
> "We wont quit practicing Plural Marriage until Christ shall come." *Wilford Woodruff*[22]
>
> "Though I go to prison, God will not change His law of Celestial Marriage." *Lorenzo Snow*[23]
>
> "There are, however, enough witnesses to these principles to establish them upon the earth in such a manner that they never can be forgotten or stamped out. For they will live;...they are bound to prevail, because they are true principles." *Joseph F.*

17 Heber C. Kimball, Journal of Discourses 4:108.
18 Charles W. Penrose, Deseret Evening News, April 23rd, 1885.
19 Revelation to John Taylor, 26 September 1886, Unpublished Revelations 88:9.
20 Brigham Young, Life of Mosiah Hancock p. 48.
21 John Taylor, Millennial Star 47:708, 9 November 1855.
22 Wilford Woodruff, John Henry Smith Journal, see Heber J. Grant Journal, 17 May 1888.
23 Lorenzo Snow, History of Utah, Orson F. Whitney, 1879.

Smith[24]

John Taylor began both the means through which those prophecies would be fulfilled, and also made a further prophesy at that momentous time, as Lorin Woolley, a witness relates, "He then set apart and placed us under covenant that while we lived **we would see to it that no year passed by without children being born in the principle of Plural Marriage**. We were given authority to ordain others if necessary to carry this work on, they in turn to be given authority to ordain others when necessary, under the direction of the worthy senior (by ordination), so that there should be no cessation in the work."[25]

Apostle Marriner W. Merrill, who would have surely come to know of the covenant those faithful brethren made, repeated President Taylor's words to a group of Saints just before the the new century. Said he, "...the time would never come when children of Polygamous parents would cease to be born in the Church."[26] A year later, another Apostle, the son of Wilford Woodruff in fact, made a similar statement, and ensured his listeners knew it was a prophesy, "...no year will ever pass, whether it be in this country [Mexico], in India, or wherever, from now until the coming of the Saviour, when children will not be born in Plural Marriage. And I make this prophecy in the name of Jesus Christ."[27]

It is also related that Presidents B.H. Roberts and Joseph F. Smith[28] made similar remarks, and we know from those men who in this century have received the same commission and authority John Taylor originally imparted have also made a the same covenant[29], and that to the present day no year has gone by without a child being born into families living plural marriage.

24 Joseph F. Smith, Journal of Discourses 21:10, 7 December 1879.
25 Woolley affidavit, see fn. 2.
26 Rudger Clawson Diary, 11 July 1899.
27 Abraham O. Woodruff, Quarterly Conference in Colonia Juarez, 18-19 November 1900, recorded by Joseph Charles Bentley (clerk), Journal and Notes p. 61.
28 Interview with Douglas M. Todd, Sr., 28 November 1969.
29 "I was instructed to see that never a year passed that children were not born in the covenant of plural marriage." *Joseph W. Musser (autobiography), 14 May 1929.*

Part Four

President Taylor foresaw that the Church would undergo a mighty change - not just of emphasis - but of altering principles, ordinances, and teachings in order for the Church's beliefs and practices to be less offensive to the world. There was a time when friendship with the world was looked upon as undesirable[30], for as James taught, "friendship of the world is enmity with God"[31]. Whereas when Brother Heber J. Grant took the reins of Church leadership he seemed to see securing a good relationship with the world as a lofty goal to be sought after. Said he, "My greatest happiness I find in the goodwill and friendship that has developed among all classes of people at home and abroad toward the LDS church during my lifetime. In place of early-day persecution and bitterness we now enjoy high regard and happy associations with all denominations."[32] He was undoubtedly eager to avoid the persecution which plagued the Church in the previous century, just as the general membership was all too eager to jettison those elements which left them too peculiar to have entered the American mainstream. The cost of such a move was a great one, however, as John Taylor prophesied, "**in the time of the seventh President of this Church, the Church would go into bondage both temporally and spiritually.**"[33]

Likewise Heber C. Kimball related to Amanda H. Wilcox in May 1868 that, "A spirit of speculation and extravagance will take possession of the Saints, and the result will be financial bondage." Orson Pratt similarly warned that, "This people, at some future time - may be possible be in bondage greater than they are at the present time."[34]

Before the death of Joseph F. Smith he had striven to free the Church from debt and succeeded. His financial prudence meant that the Church need no longer be reliant upon the world for its support, nor be beholden to business to which it was indebted. However, Heber J. Grant, who was a banking man used to the ways of the world as they related to business found occasion to put church property back into the hands of the creditors. In 1923 he took out a $30 million loan to put the Utah and Idaho sugar company back on its feet. As collateral he mortgaged Temple Square (including the temple), and the Bishop's Storehouse. During the time the temple was mortgaged (for fifty years) it belonged in the hands of the gentile bankers, not to the Saints, and so the Lord's

30 "There is nothing that would soon weaken my hope and discourage me as to see this people in full fellowship with the world, and receive no more persecution from them because they are one with them." *Brigham Young, 8 April 1862, Journal of Discourses 10:32 (see 4:38)*

31 James 4:4; see John 15:18.

32 Heber J. Grant, Salt Lake Tribune, 22 November 1938.

33 Woolley affidavit, see fn. 2.

34 7 February 1875, Journal of Discourses 17:305.

house was not wholly in the possession of His people for quite some time.

This was only the beginning of the indebtedness of the Church to the world, which has had much of its money held in the stocks and shares of non-Mormon businesses, some of which undoubtedly would be guilty of the unethical practices which almost all large corporations are. The Mormon people too have succumbed to being in such bondage: having their money in gentile banks, working for gentile employers, buying from gentile stores, being insured by gentiles, and voting for gentile political parties. Yet the Church is better organized and in a better position financially to end such dependency upon the world than it has ever been, although it is less inclined to do so than at any other point in its history.

"Spiritual Bondage"

When God's people follow after the fashions and traditions of the world, fail to live up to His expectations for them, and indicate by their actions and attitudes that they do not wish to believe all of the doctrines of the Gospel or live all of God's laws, then they are indeed under 'spiritual bondage'.

The ancient Israelites, through their choices and their lack of worthiness, had the higher law and its blessings taken away from them, whilst only a small group maintained the Gospel in it's fullness. So too at least one General Authority in this dispensation warned that the same could happen to the modern Church: "If all Israel will not be sanctified by the law which their Moses first offers them, they will peradventure receive a law of ordinances administered to them, not according to the power of an endless life."[35]

The Saints had indeed rejected one of the highest laws of God by not entering into Celestial plural Marriage, and making it known that they wished the Church to end the practice. As Joseph F. Smith stated at the dedication of the Salt Lake temple, "The reason the Manifesto was given and the principle laid aside was that many of those who entered into that principle were not keeping the commandments, and that not over two percent of the Latter-day Saints ever entered into that principle", or simply "because the Saints rejected it."[36]

Satan - who we learn from the temple endowment ceremony controls the governments of the world - had gone to war with the Saints, in a war which was prophesied in the book of Daniel[37]. The Lord revealed to Wilford Woodruff, whilst an Apostle, that this prophesy applied to our day, "The Devil is ruling over his kingdom and my Spirit

35 Franklin D. Richards, J.D. 1: 321.

36 John Mills Whitaker Journal, April 1893, W. H. Smart Diary, 1901-1902 Bk; p. 94; 28 July 1901.

37 Daniel 7:21.

has no place in the hearts of the rulers of this nation, and the Devil stirs them up to defy my power and make war upon the Saints."[38] On the eve of 1890, President Woodruff realized that the prophesy of war was "beginning to be fulfilled, that the whole nation would turn against Zion and make war upon the Saints."[39] Thousands of years previously the prophets had predicted the outcome of the battle the Church then faced: They would lose! As John the Beloved recorded, "it was given unto him (the beast) to make war with the Saints, and to overcome them."[40] The Saints need not have lost the fight though, for even as late as the year before the Manifesto, the Lord revealed, "If the Saints will hearken unto My voice ... the wicked shall not prevail." Of course the opposite was also true, "inasmuch as they .. hearken not to observe all my words, the kingdoms of the world, shall prevail against them."[41] Which is, sadly, what happened.

If God's people as a majority had followed Him there would have been no Manifesto, nor the resultant 'spiritual bondage' which John Taylor predicted would follow their actions. As the Apostle Matthias F. Cowley told the Saints at the beginning of this century: "I wish to remind you of a certain revelation given you through President Taylor*. The command was given to set our quorums and houses in order, and the promise was that if we should obey the command God would fight our battles for us; but we did not obey the command and revelation given through President Taylor, [for if we did] there would have been no Manifesto."[42]

The bondage God's people are in both temporarily and spiritually has increased over the years, as is evidenced by the declining moral standards, in the way the Gospel has been simplified, and that the Church has made efforts to stop teaching and practicing many of the principles the world and other Christian churches find offensive. However, the Lord will not allow such a situation to go on indefinitely.

Part Five

This being the last dispensation the Lord has restored the Gospel, with all its features and functions, never to be taken away again from the earth. As we have seen, however, this does not mean that the Church is obliged to promote laws the majority of members don't want to live or are unworthy of, or doctrines they don't understand or accept. The responsibility to keep such beliefs and ordinances alive still remains

38 25 January 1880, Unpublished Revelations 79:10.
39 Wilford Woodruff Journal, 31 December 1889.
40 Revelations 13:7
41 D&C 103:8.
42 Matthias F. Cowley, January 28th, 1901, Smoot Hearing 1:8. *Revelation to John Taylor, 25 December 1884; Unpublished Revelations 87:5-8, also Revelation to John Taylor, 13 October 1882; Unpublished Revelations 83:20-25.

though, and there must be a group with sufficient authority, and at least a few worthy enough to see to it that His work in such areas is still carried on. This is in line with precedent and in fulfillment of prophesy.

What of those who keep such commandments alive? Who make the personal sacrifice of living God's laws in opposition to the world, what are the Saints to make of such men and women the Lord has called to that work? Sadly, the majority of them - no longer being familiar with the principles they uphold, nor being aware of the Lord's approval of their actions - would be more likely to condemn those Mormons who maintain Mormonism as Joseph and Brigham taught and lived it. Even many of the modern Authorities, whose time is taken up with dealing with the problems amongst members throughout the world, are very often unaware that a higher Priesthood organization exists and operates, that was set up under the direction of a prophet and President of the Church. This has led to misunderstandings, even to persecution and excommunication. Just as Brother John Taylor foresaw: "**Some of you will be handled and ostracized and cast out from the Church by your brethren because of your faithfulness and integrity to this principle, and some of you may have to surrender your lives because of the same, but woe, woe, unto those who shall bring these troubles upon you**."[43]

The idea of righteous Saints being cast out of the Church is nothing new. Alma came upon members in his day who had been cast out of the synagogues[44], and Jesus also warned that it was a prospect that the righteous might face[45]. Joseph once lamented how a man was tried for his membership because of his personal beliefs[46], and an Apostle decades later wrote in a Church magazine how sad it was that sometime people were excommunicated, when they shouldn't have been, and how the Spirit remains with such people[47]. Some have incorrectly supposed that having a person's name removed from the records of the Church also removes any Priesthood that they held, but the Priesthood is only removed by personal unworthiness and not by Church courts, as John

43 Woolley affidavit, see fn. 2.

44 Alma 32:2-3.

45 Matt 10:17, see John 9:22,12:42

46 "I did not like the old man being called up for erring in doctrine. It looks too much like the Methodists, and not like the Latter-Day Saints. Methodists have creeds which a man must believe or be asked out of their Church. I want the liberty of thinking and believing as I please. It feels so good not to be trammelled. It does not prove that a man is not a good man because he errs in doctrine." *(Joseph Smith, History of the Church 5:340)*

47 "Persons sometimes say that they have enjoyed the spirit of the work as much since they were cut off as while they were in the Church. Have they enjoyed the Spirit? Yes. Why? Simply because they were wrongfully cut off. They were cut off in a way that it did not not take the Spirit of the God from them. And the reason why they were cut off was because they didn't come to the particular standard of perfection of those who dealt with them, or they did not come up to their feelings." *(Millennial Star 24:9)*

Taylor and Joseph F. Smith plainly taught[48].

Such action could not take place, however, without some leaders approving or at least overlooking the injustice. Most members have become unaware of the strange past of the Church, and look upon those who keep alive the 'old' ways as even stranger. As the traditions and teachings of 'the world' have gained greater acceptance amongst members, so too has intolerance of those lifestyles and ideas which seem to starkly conflict with the "American way" of life. Even many leading men within the Church have not been immune to such influences, and some have even been involved in the persecution of those men and women who live those laws the Church once promoted. Joseph warned that this would one day be the case, when he confided to a friend that, "You will live to see men arise in power in the Church who will seek to put down your friends and the friends of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Many will be hoisted because of their money and worldly learning which they seem to be in possession of; and many who are the true followers of our Lord and Saviour will be cast down."[49]

The Lord does not give any commandment though without providing a way that the faithful might keep it. So too, unpopularity, excommunication, and even martyrdom has not stopped a group of Saints from ensuring that no year has passed without God's highest laws being kept alive. "Though they may imprison or kill most Mormons there will always be someone left to carry on the work,"[50] said John Taylor, and he was a man who knew what his words meant. For he himself would spend most of his presidency in hiding, even from members who would have handed him in for the reward! And "woe unto those who cut men off from the Church for private pique, or to exercise undue dominion, or for any reason not prompted by truth and righteousness! All the acts of men, official or otherwise, will be reviewed and passed upon in that great day."[51]

For as a First Presidency member, George Q. Cannon stated so powerfully, "I tell you, the salvation that will come to this people, will be through the faithfulness of the men of God and the women of God who, in the face of an opposing world, contrary to their traditions, to their education, to their pre-conceived notions and to the popular prejudices of the day - who have in the midst of all this stepped forward

48 "You cannot take away any man's Priesthood without transgression." *(John Taylor, Times and Seasons 6:922.)*
*"*No endowments or blessings in the house of the Lord, no Patriarchal blessings, no ordination to the Priesthood, can be taken away, once given. To prevent for just cause from excercising the rights and privileges of acting in the offices of acting in the Priesthood [within the Church], may be and has been done, and the person so silenced still remain a member of the Church, but this does not take away from him any Priesthood that he held." *(Joseph F. Smith, Improvement Era 11:466.)*

49 Joseph Smith, Mosiah Hancock Journal, p. 19.

50 Deseret News Weekly, 25 February 1885.

51 Millennial Star 40:262-63.

in the vanguard and obeyed the command of God, and have dared to endure all the consequences, and have been willing to endure all the penalties."[52]

Part Six

President Cannon, made another important prophesy that has been fulfilled, when he said: "The day will come when men's Priesthood and authority will be called into question, and you will find out that there will be hundreds who have no Priesthood, but believe they hold it, they holding only an office in the Church."[53] His remarks it seems followed on from the prediction of President Taylor (which Brother Cannon would have heard firsthand, he also being at the meeting at which he spoke), "**I would be surprised if ten percent of those who claim to hold the Melchizedek Priesthood will remain true and faithful to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, at that time of the seventh President, and there would be thousands that think they hold the Priesthood at that time, but would not have it properly conferred upon them**."[54] It is interesting that he said that these things would happen in the time of the seventh President of the Church, who of course was Heber J. Grant.

What might cause the Priesthood to cease amongst so many men, or could change so drastically as to prevent it being passed on? Certainly the attitude of members against Celestial Plural Marriage qualifies as one of those areas in which many might lose God's favor and even bring the authority of some who fought against it into question. As an editorial from the Church's own newspaper warned, "The entire Church and all of its Priesthood, with the Presidency at the head of it might motion and vote against this principle until doomsday with just one effect, (namely) to vote themselves away from the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, from the possession of their Priesthood."[55] As has been pointed out, such a vote did take place, and it was not without consequence.

In the same year Brother Cannon warned the Saints about losing the Priesthood, President Joseph F. Smith reaffirmed the method ordinations to the Priesthood should follow, and how, "the conferring of the Priesthood should precede and accompany ordination to an office, unless it is possessed by previous bestowal and ordination."[56] Just as Brigham Young had instructed regarding ordinations, "Do not forget to confer the High Priesthood upon them."[57]

However, Charles W. Penrose, Counselor to President Smith,

52 George Q. Cannon, 8 October 1882, Journal of Discourses 23:280.
53 1901, Draper, Utah, as related by Daniel R. Bateman.
54 Woolley affidavit, see fn. 2.
55 Deseret News, Editorial, 1 April 1885.
56 March 1901, Improvement Era 4:394.
57 Deseret News, 6 June 1877.

must have disagreed with him on this point, and said shortly after his death, "We have been making a mistake in ordinations. We have been conferring the Priesthood, and it ought not to be done.... We should ordain directly to the office in the Priesthood."[58] Instead of correcting Penrose, Heber J. Grant implemented his views, and on the 23rd of April 1921 the First Presidency announced a new form of ordinations in which the words "confer upon you the Melchizedek Priesthood" were removed.

36 years later the Church returned to it's original form of ordination, but the years in between in which they departed from President Smith's strict instructions cannot be easily explained away. If we are to believe Joseph F. Smith, then during that period all the ordinations were invalid, as well as all the ordinances since by those ordained during that time, for he stated, "Surely a man cannot possess an appendage to the Priesthood without possessing the Priesthood itself, which he cannot obtain unless it be authoritatively conferred upon him." As Brigham Young said, "No being can give that which he does not possess; consequently, no man can confer the Priesthood on another, if he has not himself first received it."[59] However surprisingly President McKay made no effort to ordering the re-conferral of the Priesthood on everyone ordained during that time, and the re-performance of every ordinance by anyone ordained during that time, and so the situation has probably worsened considerably.

The removal of Priesthood conferral in ordination is only one area in which John Taylor's prophecy has been fulfilled. The revocation or alteration of any other ordinance can cause the withdrawal of Priesthood (or at least produces questions over its effectiveness) from those who sustain such changes or participate in such an altered Gospel. As an early Church publication put it, "the priesthood can not continue when the gospel is perverted;"[60] Whilst specific examples are beyond the scope of this particular treatment, yet many books and magazine articles have been written outlining such changes, and it remains up to us as faithful Latter-day Saints to personally receive and perpetuate the ordinances of God has He has given them, because as Joseph stated, "that the ordinances must be kept in the very way God has appointed; otherwise their Priesthood will prove a cursing instead of a blessing."[61]

The fulfillment of these last prophecies of President John Taylor in so literal a manner is another testimony that John Taylor did indeed fulfill a special purpose in setting in motion the manner through which the laws of God would continue, and that those set apart by him and who were present and testified of these events were both honest and accurate in their accounts. The Bible sets this as a sure test of truthfulness, but

58 Stake Quarterly Conference, Utah Stake, Provo, Utah, 1919, as recollected by Daniel R. Peay.
59 History of the Church 4:257.
60 Times and Seasons, Nov. 15, 1841.
61 TPJS, p 169.

there is yet another test which leaves us with even greater certainty that God's hand is in the work to keep the fullness of the Gospel alive, that is the Spirit of God. May that Spirit witness the truthfulness of the Priesthood authority that acts on His behalf, and the laws which he has not revoked, nor will He!

The Christian Cost of Rooting Out Polygamy

by Joseph Milimo
(a 72 year old member of the Tonga Tribe in Zambia)

I was only a small boy at the time. But I remember very well how all of sudden Friar Jean-Paul became a regular visitor in our compound. No doubt, there was something he was looking for. We suspected it.

In those days, very few people were literate in the area. My father was among the privileged few. And that was the reason for Father Jean-Paul's visits. He was courting my father.

Friar Jean-Paul began first with making it clear to my father that unless we accepted the Good News he had brought and were baptized, the whole family would have to perish in hell. The priest had a clear picture of how God would deal with the unbelieving people in hell, so horrifying a place as he described to us. We just couldn't risk it. We would rather be baptized. But my father needed to do more than that. He would have to use his gift, the ability to read and write, to help others as a catechist to be saved too.

Apart from the thrill of being poured with holy water on the head, anointed with chrism, given a lit candle and a white cloth, which together made the rite solemn, there were other things that could not leave my father unmoved.

If he would accept being a catechist, he would be sent for training. On coming back, he would be given a cassock, a bicycle and would be entitled to a few coins as monthly allowance. This was something in those days.

Friar Jean-Paul succeeded in winning my father's heart. However, my father had no idea what that would cost him. Before my father could be baptized, he had first to conform to the way of life demanded by the priest. The way we lived, the priest had convinced my father, was not good for a Christian, much less for a catechist.

In our compound, there were two houses: one for my father's senior wife and the other for my mother. From the two households altogether, we were 14 children. We all knew one another and lived as brothers and sisters. We never felt we came from different mothers. They were mothers to all of us. Whenever one was not around, we were sure of the same care from whoever remained. How beautiful it was to see how the two mothers loved each other. They were like sisters.

We had only one family field that we cultivated and we always had enough to eat. As a family, we were morally exemplary in the village and we commanded a lot of respect. This is the life that the priest was not satisfied with.

We lived happily like that till he disturbed us. One day we were

bereaved -- impoverished by the absence of one mother forever. My mother was sent away in order to pave way for my father to be baptized, receive Jesus and become a catechist.

This meant nothing to Friar Jean-Paul. He told my father that according to canon law, there had never been a marriage between him and my mother. This is what hurts me even after being a Catholic for 60 years. When I was still young, I only suffered the pain of missing Mother and the embarrassment of seeing her married later to another man whom certainly she never loved as she had loved my father. But the more I grew up and began to reason, the more bitter I became about the church. It is not just because of breaking up the family. There was something else.

In my culture, you are either born in marriage with all the respect that gives or out of wedlock with all the scorn. So even if he never said it, for Friar Jean-Paul to tell my father he had never been married to my mother, the implication was clear: I am a bastard, with all the contempt that the word implies.

from the
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John W. Woolley – Apostle & Prophet

John Wickersham Woolley was born to Edwin D. and Mary W. Woolley (the first of Edwin's seven wives) in Newlin, Columbia, Pennsylvania on the 30th of December 1831. His father was originally a Quaker farmer, but he was converted to Mormonism in 1837. He would later become Brigham Young's business manager, as well as one of his closest friends, and a Bishop from 1853 to 1881.

Little did his parents know at his birth the important role he would yet fulfill in the history of the Gospel, and that he would one day be a Patriarch, Apostle, Prophet, President of the Priesthood, Successor to Joseph F. Smith, father of a future Prophet, uncle to Church President Spencer W. Kimball, and Apostle's J. Reuben Clark and John W. Taylor, as well as being father-in-law to B.H. Roberts, President of the Seventy.

One of John's earliest memories was that of sitting on the Prophet Joseph's knee. Even at eight years old he was considered sufficiently prepared to receive his Patriarchal Blessing from Joseph Smith Sr, the Presiding Patriarch. In it he was promised he would "be called to responsible stations," that it would involve having to "receive keys", as well as "glory and honor" and "worlds of knowledge and power", and that he would one day "be called the Lord's anointed."

He was chosen to cross the plains with Brigham Young's group of pioneers. In his Blessing as a boy, it had said he would, "yet travel among the mountains of the west" and "bring the sons of Ephraim to the lands of their Inheritance." In fulfillment of this he was among the first to meet the handcart companies in 1856, and in 1860 and 1863 he brought emigrants across the plains himself. On the last occasion Joseph F. Smith acted as the chaplain in his 'company', and they became lifelong friends, with President Smith having picnics with the Woolley family and speaking at his wife's funeral.

John Woolley held many responsible civil stations, such as Constable, Justice of the Peace, Deputy Sheriff, Deputy Territorial Marshal, and County Commissioner. Within the Nauvoo Legion (in the territory of Deseret) he served as a Lieutenant, Captain, Sergeant and Major. He participated in the Black Hawk War, and was one of the ten who crossed the Little Mountain to meet Johnston's Army in 1857.

Having been ordained a High Priest by Brigham Young, He served on a Bishopric, as a High Councillor in the Davis Stake, and was later ordained a Patriarch. He also was an ordinance worker in the Salt Lake Temple, and he opened General Conference with prayer on more than one occasion. He was sealed to his first wife Julia E. Sirls in March 1851 and was Endowed at the same time. He went on later to marry Ann Everington in 1886, and in 1910 married Annie Fisher, Joseph F. Smith performing the ceremony.

When John Taylor was in hiding there were very few homes in which he felt his safety was secure, and very few people in whom he placed his confidence1. John Woolley was one of these men, and his son Lorin acted as a messenger and sometimes a bodyguard for President John Taylor. It was in John Woolley's home that Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith visited President Taylor on the night of September 26th, 1886, and on the following day set five men apart (including John, his son, and George Q. Cannon) as Apostles, with a special commission to keep alive Celestial Plural Marriage, and the authority to set apart others similarly.2

As John Taylor prophesied he was cut off from the Church for performing the mission he had been called to, as were many of those who kept their covenant to keep alive God's laws after the Church had abandoned them. But he continued to carry out this mission under the direction of those who presided over him3 until just before the death of Joseph F. Smith in 19184. After President Smith's life ended, the responsibility fell upon Woolley (he being the most senior Apostle worthy and willing to keep alive all of the Gospel) of presiding over those keys and ordinances that the Church had rejected, just as his Patriarchal Blessing had predicted.

After John W. Woolley's death in 1928, his son Lorin succeeded him as President of the Priesthood, and to see that the work of God continued he called Apostles to ensure the fullness of Priesthood remained upon the earth, and its ordinances in the manner God had restored them to Joseph originally. This authority has continued to the present day.

Modesty – What Does The Lord Expect of Us?

There are certain expectations that God's Priesthood leaders and most Latter-day Saint parents have always expected from the youth (as well as adults). Such as not wearing short skirts, tops that show the belly, or are too low. As well as dresses for women at spiritual and formal meetings. These might be considered the minimum that they ask them to keep to, but this does not mean that God doesn't expect more of us as individuals.

There was a time when many of the Saints looked upon the holy garments as a standard of modesty, whether someone wore them or not. Clothing – even for teenagers – was expected by many parents and leaders (and youth themselves) to reach to at least the mid-forearm and mid-calves, with nothing below the collarbone showing on any top. Skirts and dresses were considered normal wear for women most of the time, not just at meetings, because they believed pants for women to be too masculine, and they took pride in their femininity. (It must be noted though that dresses and skirts weren't as flimsy as most of those today, and there were different types to accommodate for different weathers and types of work.) Those days were largely forgotten as the Church discarded the long garments in favor of a shorter variety because of the complaints of women who felt alienated from worldly fashions.

Before this happened, even swimming suits worn publicly covered much more of the body, and yet we are now at the point where we excuse many things we wear because of where we wear them – such as at a swimming pool, playing sports, or because its hot outside – as if exposing more of our skin to the sun protects it better from its rays!

The issue of modesty has become one which – beyond basic standards – each young person has now had to decide for themselves. Sadly some of them have gone for the lowest standard, so not to look out of place or to risk being unpopular. Yet there have been a few who have sought to raise their standards, to obtain the greater blessings of following how the Lord would have them dress.

We need to discover as individuals what God expects of us, and learn that whatever He asks of us will lead to us being more protected (spiritually, and often also physically), more free from the negative influences, and make it easier for the Lord to work with us as we try to become closer to Him and build up His kingdom. When we do set these standards for ourselves we must be careful though not to compromise them, and not to judge others who have not come to the same understanding, but in all we do to set a good example that others might wish to follow. If enough of the youth did this they would could even a new modest form of fashion – at least amongst those in the Gospel.

Even a feminist, Simone de Beauvior, believed that if women abandoned her natural instincts toward modesty, devastating

consequences would result eventually. Sadly her worries turned out to be so true. Women are now more thought of as objects of lustfulness, or are popular or famous just because of their looks.

Some say "it doesn't matter what I wear, God doesn't care" or they actually say that they "don't care whether God cares or not." Yet in doing this they show they care more about what others think, others who do not know them or love them as well as God does. Many times it is the attitude of defiance, and the eagerness to be worldly, that condemns us more than the actual clothing (or lack thereof) does. Are we really trying to please ourselves or trying to keep up with others? What are we trying to prove and who are we trying to prove it to? Are you really deprived because you follow God's way rather than the worlds? We must remember that respect and popularity are not the same things.

What we wear effects not only how others see us - but reflects how we see ourselves and that our clothes can influence us. Would we feel comfortable in a bikini within the temple? If we wore modest clothes would we be as comfortable in a bar?

Yet sometimes we lower our standards so not to seem abnormal to those around us. That is neither modesty or humility. It is God's standards we must uphold, and Him we should be humble before, and if that makes us stand out in a crowd – so be it! What means more to us – peer approval or God's approval? We can ultimately gain greater dignity and confidence by standing up for what we believe that by worry what critical people might think of us.

How you dress also reflects on others who are part of your community. Those around you may look to you as an example, and those outside of your circle may see you as typical of what those of your faith are like. Most people respect the Amish, despite the fact that their clothing may look outdated, because it represents the fact that they stand by their beliefs within dignity and without compromise.

God expects us to be a "peculiar people," *(1 Pet 2:9)* but sometimes as a young woman or man that is the last thing we want to be known as. Yet when friendships change, and school or college ends we will have developed habits and outlooks that we will be trying to cultivate (or eliminate) for the rest of our lives, and we may look back and wish we had drawn closer to God during those times we needed His help, rather than worry about those around us.

Modesty begins with the heart and not the hemline. It is as simple as saying as the hymn does "I'll go where you want me to go dear Lord," I'll wear what you want me to wear, and "I'll be what you want me to be." It is a question of attitude more than what we wear, because when our attitude is right before God it will reflect in our actions, as well as in our clothing. It is summed up in the last Article of Faith, "if there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things." *(A of F 1:13).*

Some questions you may want to ask yourself -

- Does my attire call improper attention to me? Do my clothes cause people to focus on my outward appearance in such a way that they might either misunderstand me or misjudge my character?

- Is my clothing revealing? Or is it suggestive, figure-hugging, or provocative?

- Do I feel comfortable with my grooming and dress in the presence of those I most respect and admire? Does my dress set a good example for those I love.

- Does my attire and grooming require so much of my time, attention, and means that I neglect more important, weightier matters?

- Who am I trying to please: My friends, a young man or woman, or God?

Some Recommended books -

A Return to Modesty: Discovering the Lost Virtue
by Wendy Shalit

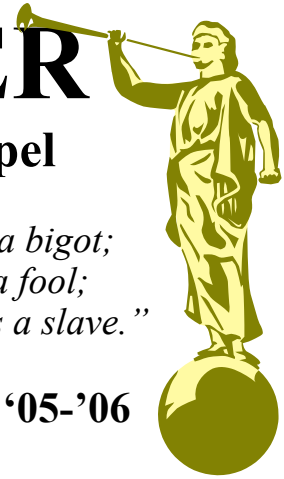
Secret Keeper: The Delicate Power of Modesty
by Dannah Gresh

Christian Modesty and the Public Undressing of America
by Jeff Pollard

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel

"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."



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Perfection – The Impossible Dream?

Almost 2,000 years after Jesus walked the Earth His teachings are still as controversial today as when He first gave them. Most famous among the body of His teachings, are those He gave in what is commonly called "the Sermon on the Mount," in which He challenged many of the beliefs then commonly held among those He addressed.

His Gospel was a practical Gospel, and He told His listeners that the hope He offered of a better world would take more than mental acceptance of the principles He taught, but rather a complete obedience to those precepts. He couched this in sayings such as, "except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven,"[1] and, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."[2]

He did not leave them to wonder what was expected of them, but gave instructions that if they were to gain the salvation they sought, they must refrain from lustfulness[3], pray for the welfare of those who hate them[4], give charity secretly[5], not hoard the means of wealth[6], and that were they to curse their brother (and fail to repent) they would "be in danger of hell fire"![7] Such definite statements leave us in little doubt how we should act, yet there is one commandment He left us which many conclude is impossible for us to keep, and therefore seek to excuse themselves from obeying: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."[8]

As Latter-day Saints we are of the belief that we are only obliged to believe the Bible "as far as it is translated correctly,"[9] and so it would be easy to excuse ourselves from following what Jesus said on this occasion by concluding it to be erroneously transcribed or wrongly translated. However, Joseph Smith in his inspired revision of this passage only adds greater importance to the Saviour's words by prefacing them "Ye are therefore commanded to be perfect."[10] That this is no erroneous interpretation is manifest by returning to the Holy Scriptures, which tell us in the law God gave to Moses, "Thou shalt be

1 Matthew 5:20
2 Matthew 7:21
3 Matthew 5:27-28
4 Matthew 5:43-44
5 Matthew 6:1-4
6 Matthew 6:19-21
7 Matthew 5:21-22
8 Matthew 5:48
9 Articles of Faith 8
10 Matthew 5:50, Joseph Smith Translation

perfect with the Lord thy God."[11]

Let us not think for a moment that such a task as perfection is beyond our abilities, for whatever the Lord asks of us he has promised that, "I will provide means whereby thou mayest accomplish the thing which I have commanded thee."[12] In the scriptural record known as the Old Testament there are several examples of men who were regarded as perfect, such as Noah who was "a just man and perfect in his generations,"[13] and Job who was "perfect and upright."[14] Also in modern revelation are we informed that "Seth was a perfect man," and that Adam must also have been, because (it is said of Seth), "his likeness was the express likeness of his father *[Adam],* insomuch that he seemed to be like unto his father in all things, and could be distinguished from him only by his age."[15] Such a relationship can be shown between Christ and His Father, of which Jesus said, "he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."[16] Similarly, Jesus taught the Nephites after His resurrection that, "I would that ye should be perfect even as I, or your Father who is in heaven is perfect."[17]

This confronts us with the question of, "what do the scriptures mean by perfection?" This has also been the subject of some speculation, with some of the Apostles of this century speculating that perfection was an eventual state that the righteous would reach long after leaving this earth. To give an example; Elder Joseph Fielding Smith Jr. said, "Another error entertained by Church members ... was that when Jesus said, 'Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect,' He meant perfection in a relative sense. He said Jesus meant just what He said."[18] We cannot however assume that this was a view held by all the General Authorities of the Church, for this young Apostle's own Father, President Joseph F. Smith Sr. gave an entirely different impression when he shared his belief that, "I do not expect that any of us will ever become in mortality quite so perfect as God is perfect; but in the spheres in which we are called to act, and according to the capacity and breadth of intelligence that we possess, in our sphere, and in the existence of the talent, the ability, and intelligence that God has given to us, we may become as perfect in our sphere as God is perfect in his higher and more exalted sphere."[19]

In trying to steer a course between these two divergent views, Bruce R. McConkie in his encyclopedic Mormon Doctrine tries to make a differentiation between uses of the word 'perfect'; "Perfection," he

11 Deuteronomy 18:13
12 Doctrine and Covenants 5:34
13 Genesis 6:9
14 Job 1:1
15 Doctrine and Covenants 107:43
16 John 14:9, see Hebrews 1:3
17 3 Nephi 12:48
18 Deseret News, 13 November 1922, Ogden Stake Quarterly Conference
19 Conference Report, April 1915, p. 140; Gospel Doctrine, p. 252

gives as his opinion, "is of two kinds - finite or mortal, and infinite or eternal." But commenting on the commandment of Jesus regarding this matter we find him reverting to Joseph Fielding Smith's position that, "When the Lord told the Jews, 'Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect', he was speaking of ultimate eternal perfection in His Father's Kingdom."[20] To these two Apostles the type of perfection Jesus and the Father had attained seemed to be something beyond the reach of us mere mortals, yet to a prophet of God such as Brigham Young the concept presented no problem, and he believed it "perfectly consistent to the person who understands what perfection really is."[21]

The word 'perfect' as it appears in our modern translations of the Bible had many different shades of meaning in its original language. It could, for instance, refer to being "fully developed"[22] or reaching maturity, and not necessarily be speaking of the unchanging state we commonly think of perfection as being. It seems from President Young's own inspired commentary on the Saviour's injunction to be perfect that such is the case in this instance, as he explains further: "we can alter the phraseology of the sentence, and say, 'Be ye as perfect as ye can,' for that is all we can do, though it is written, 'be ye perfect as your Father who is in heaven is perfect'. To be as perfect as we possibly can, according to our knowledge, is to be just as perfect as our Father in heaven is. He cannot be any more perfect than He knows how, any more than we. When we are doing as well as we know how in the sphere and station which we occupy here, we are justified in the justice, righteousness, mercy, and judgment that go before the Lord of heaven and earth. We are as justified as the angels who are before the throne of God."[23]

Such is the only reasonable view. Would Jesus have given a commandment that was impossible for his followers to obey? Would the scriptures speak of some men as having attained perfection, if the perfect God which inspired those scriptures did not consider them to have reached that state?

It is true that Jesus was perfect in one sense that no other man could be; He was perfect from the moment of his birth until He drew his last breath. In this respect He is unique, and yet like all mortal men "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."[24] Which raises the question, "Can we increase in perfection?" to which Brother Brigham answers, "We can!"[25] The path of perfection then is not a destination but a never-ending journey, and it is within this

20 Mormon Doctrine, Perfection
21 18 December 1853, Journal of Discourses 2:129-30
22 Matthew 5:48, Footnote b, Greek alternate translation, LDS Edition, 1981
23 18 December 1853, Journal of Discourses 2:129-30
24 Luke 2:52, see Doctrine and Covenants 93:12-13
25 20 August 1854, Teachings of President Brigham Young, p. 323

life that we choose whether we will take that route or the wider road to lesser glory.

There is no grand secret to being perfect, in fact every person on the earth has sufficient knowledge to be perfect in their sphere, although such knowledge would not be sufficient to eventually exalt them. Again we find this concept - which is so misunderstood, even among most Mormons - simply and succinctly explained by Brigham Young: “People often say no man is perfect in this world. But I say the man or woman that does as well as they know how, are perfect. There is perfect men among the heathens, because they do as well as they know how. Man can be as perfect in his sphere as God is in His. To be so, he must do all the good he can and do nothing that he knows to be wrong.”[26] We might find some non-Mormon Christians mocking at such ideas, and yet among the more inspired among them, such as John Wesley (the founder of Methodism), we find similar thoughts expressed as, “do all the good you can, in all the ways you can, as often as you can.” The keys to perfection then are always living up to the light you have, constantly seeking for further knowledge, and being unreservedly prepared to fulfill the commitments that it brings.

26 Ibid.

Why He Came

His birth could have been heralded by trumpets
His cot made of silk, and housed in a palace
He could of commanded as a king His subjects praises
But He did not come to rule over earthly things

He could of been entertained by dignitaries
Yet He went to the poor and lowly
While He could of owned herds
Instead He was a humble shepherd
He came to lead us to His Father
And to be our our Saviour

He could of been tutored by scholars and priests
Wearing fine clothing and enjoying rich feasts
Commanding obedience from men and subjection of beasts
Yet He bore persecution that we might know peace

His life could of been full of ease and luxury
But He suffered so others could be free
He might of left behind a dynasty
To keep His name honoured
Though now his it is taken lightly
Still there is none higher

His tomb could of been a monument atop a hill
But His garden grave He didn't need
As His mission was not yet fulfilled
For He rose again and He lives still!

Of all the things He could have been
He is all we will ever need to be
He may not have come as a king in glory
But there is no miracle greater
Than what Jesus, a lowly carpenter
Has done for you and me

Worldly Fashions vs. Gospel Standards

This article (the first of a series on issues related to modesty) has been written with the idea in mind that those reading it might examine themselves and their own views and motivations on matters of fashion. We should not use it as a measure for judging others as we do not know their level of knowledge or commitment to the Gospel or their intent. If we feel prompted to broach these subjects with our friends, let us do it in the spirit of love rather than criticism, and let us first look at ourselves and see how we can be better examples.

We live in a world in which people often judge you by the way you look. Its hard being someone who doesn't seem to fit in because they are not wearing the 'right thing'. Perhaps you are fortunate enough to have friends who don't care about fashion, or perhaps the styles shown on TV and in movies don't interest you.

You might wonder "what's wrong with wearing this?" You might think those who criticize a certain style of dress are being too judgmental. You might reason that God doesn't care what you wear or how you look. When we read what God has to say on the subject, we will find that there is often a conflict between worldly fashions and gospel standards and between how our friends might like us to look and what God expects of us.

What to wear is a dilemma that has confronted teenagers from the beginning of the world. While robes were once the 'in thing', one wonders whether some of the more fashionable youth of Israel raised their hems a little higher or cut their necklines a little lower to impress their friends.

God doesn't want his people to be like everyone else, He told them they should be "a peculiar people ... above all the nations." *(Deuteronomy 14:2)* When we think of the word peculiar we often associate it with being weird or odd, but originally it meant to be special or unique. The Lord wanted his people to be above the norm, better than the average. He didn't want them to be like everyone else, and told them to "be not conformed to this world" *(Romans 12:2)*, or in other words not to be like the rest the world.

There are many areas in which some of us may have become worldly. At first some things may seem relatively harmless. The more we learn about God's ways, however, the more we'll realise the dangers of ignoring God's counsel.

Long Hair

Long hair has often been associated with devoutly Christian women.

Artists renderings of saintly women from the Bible have always portrayed them with long hair. Likewise female beauty has often been associated with flowing hair. This image has continued to the present. Whenever a princess or queen is depicted in movies, T.V. or books, she almost always has long flowing hair.

Although styles of hair have varied greatly throughout time and in different cultures of the world, the fashion for short hair in our era probably began with the 'flapper' girls of the 1920's and 30's. These young women liked to dance, drink, and smoke, and were amongst the first partying feminists of their age. It was a time when women were beginning to assert their rights in areas besides the vote, and this meant they wanted the right to act as they perceived men often acted.

Short hair became popularly viewed as 'cute' as it resembled a little girls' hairstyle. For some, especially women who entered the male workplace for the first time, it also seemed convenient. No longer need women spend time on their hair, as they had jobs to go to.

Some of these reasons for short hair may no longer seem personally relevant to today's young woman who see short hair as just another style, but the the history of that style helps us to understand why many women stopped growing their hair or cut it, and what their attitudes were in doing so. The Apostle Paul in his day must have seen just about every style of dress, as his missionary work took him amongst the Jews, Romans and Greeks - Three very different civilizations, with very different customs. In his epistle to the Corinthians, Paul addressed the standards the Lord expected of men and women when it came to hair. His letter was not just intended for them though but to "all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ." *(1 Corinthians 1:2)*

He told the ancient Saints that "every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head" but that a man ought not to cover his head. *(1 Corinthians 11:5,7)* Some have taken these verses to mean that men should not wear hats or that women should. But Paul did not leave us in doubt as to what covering of which he was speaking. He said a woman's "hair is given her for a covering," yet, "if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him." *(v. 14)*

Why then if a man is encouraged to have short hair, is a women told to grow hers long? Paul gave several reasons for this. The one which is most easily accepted is that "if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her." *(v. 15)* Indeed long hair is graceful and beautiful, but the word 'glory' spoken of in this passage is translated from the Greek word 'doxa', which means "splendor, radiance, magnificence, and honor." This is why it was considered less honorable for a woman to have short hair. God intended a woman to have long hair, and she honors God by growing it long.

In having it long, she also shows that she honors her heavenly

'head', who is God, and her earthly priesthood head, who is her husband, whom she chose to preside, provide, and protect. He shows his submission to God by keeping his hair short just as she shows her submission to him through keeping it long. "The woman is the glory," also, "of the man." Her part in his life is a blessing to him, and she is like a precious crown without which he would lacks the royal splendor that makes a humble man a king.

Women have also used their hair in the service of God and to show their love and devotion. We have the wonderful example of Mary, sister of Lazarus in the scriptures who anointed Jesus with her hair, prior to his crucifixion. *(John 12:3,7)* Such was the love for her Savior and Lord. Jesus himself said about her example, "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her." *(Mark 14:9)*

Long hair for women does not signify she is powerless. The scriptures tell us, rather, she has "power on her head because of the angels." *(1 Corinthians 11:10)*

There are times men do literally cover their heads, anciently high priests were required to do so at certain times, and there is a special time for a woman to be veiled. There is more to this subject than can be discussed here. Those who have seen a traditional Christian wedding may recognize this and perhaps appreciate the moment when the groom lifts his brides veil and he sees the beautiful woman he is marrying.

All of this aside, there will be many pressures on young women in today's society to cut their hair. Long hair is not always fashionable or popular. It takes more work to care for. Some men may treat women who have long hair with less respect in the workplace. Some women don't want to look as if they are 'polygamists' by having long hair or wearing dresses.

Such arguments against long hair are also some of the best ones for having it long. It helps distinguish us from the world. God wants us to be a special people, a light on a hill, to stand apart, and to set an example. Also long hair for women and short hair for men helps distinguish the genders. Women are the inheritors of spiritual strength that comes from keeping the commandment for them to have long hair.

Just as when men grew their hair long in the 1960's to challenge authority, so too women sometimes cut theirs short to show their 'independence'. But is following fashion really a sign of independence? Rather, it seems that men with long hair or women with short hair are showing they put the world first.

Earrings & Other Piercings

Probably the most common and socially acceptable fashion item in the world today is earrings. We find them on the ears of even the most

devout Christians and those of other faiths. Many young women long for the age when their ears are first pierced, and it is rare to find an adult woman anywhere who does not at least have the holes in her ears to show where her earrings usually hang from. In fact it has become fairly common to have two or three earrings now in each ear, as well as piercings elsewhere - such as on the nose, tongue, eyebrow, lip or navel.

Whilst jewelers are undoubtedly happy with the extra sales they have been bringing in, we as Latter-day Saints should be aware what the Lord's outlook is on this issue. Earrings were probably as common in ancient times as they are today, and there are some interesting stories in the Scriptures on how the Lord and his servants treated them. One of the earliest accounts was of Jacob telling his household (his family and servants) to put away "all their earrings" and their idols. Then he buried them before he built an altar and saw the Lord. *(Genesis 35:1-7)*

There are several other passages that deal with God's people giving up their earrings as an offering or sacrifice to the Lord or to build His holy temples *(Exodus 35:4-29)*. When the children of Israel came out of Egypt, they carried with them the jewelry of many of the rich Egyptians, which Moses told them to offer up as an "atonement for their souls before the Lord." Moses took the jewelry and placed it in the tabernacle as "a memorial for the children of Israel before the Lord." *(Numbers 31:49-54)* Gideon, a later prophet of the Lord also asked the Saints in his day to do likewise. *(Judges 8:19-26)*

Even though earrings were given as an offering to our Heavenly Father when the people became wicked and sought to worship idols, they often used the gold from their jewelry to make false gods. *(Exodus 32:1-4)*

The Lord made it clear that earings and other ornaments could be an obstacle to approaching Him when he told the people to remove them before he judged them *(Exodus 33:1-6)* just as Jacob had his family and servants do before the Lord appeared to Him. Interestingly slaves in ancient times wore earings to show that they were "unredeemable", and had chosen to be slaves for the whole of their mortal lives. *(Exodus 21:6)* In perhaps the same way, many people today make a similar choice to be slaves to fashion.

All of these passages so far have referred to the past. This does not mean that the Lord didn't foresee and have something to say about such customs in our day. The Prophet Isaiah was given a vision of our times when the "daughters of Zion" would be "haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet:" *(Isaiah 3:16)* God gave a warning to such women as to what would happen to them:

> "In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, ... The chains, and the bracelets, and the

mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, The rings, and nose jewels ..." *(Isaiah 3:18-21)*

Likewise Ezekiel speaks of a day when women will throw the gold jewelry they were once proud of into the streets in shame, hoping it will save them from the coming judgements. *(Ezekiel 7:18-20)*

Some might wonder why God picked out earrings and piercings for special mention rather than other jewelry. Earrings differ from other types of jewelry because having them usually requires a person to be pierced, to put a hole into the body God has given them. God tells us our bodies are to be temples *(1 Corinthians 6:19)* and that we should keep them holy and undefiled. Other jewelry can be taken off without leaving any sign that they were ever worn but an earing hole usually becomes a permanent mark.

Rather than making extra holes in our flesh to follow fashion, or draping our bodies with expensive jewelry God instructs us - we should have "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves." *(1 Peter 3:5)* He promised that those who follow Him in that way will once day "sparkle in His land like jewels in a crown." *(Zechariah 9:16 NTL translation)*

We must ask ourselves whose approval do we seek? Or whose disapproval are we trying to avoid? Are we willing to humbly change our styles to reflect our choices to serve and obey God that we might achieve His expectations of righteousness?

"There are those who, perhaps, fear less being in hell than being out of fashion."
(Ben Franklin)

An Uninterrupted Line Of Authority

Whether we carry it in our wallet or top pocket, or have it written out like a certificate in our family or personal history, or whether we can recite it (names, offices, dates and all), our line of authority is something we consider to be very special. It is our link back to the Saviour, and the Prophet Joseph. It shows that a power which has existed since the beginning of the world, and was even used to organize the world, has been entrusted to us, to use within our families for their salvation, and for the building up of God's kingdom.

Whilst ministers of other faiths may wear ceremonial robes to identify their importance, we have the knowledge that we can trace back to Jesus the right to administer in His name, and there is no greater honor or privilege. The scriptures, both ancient and modern, contain the lines of authority of many righteous individuals, showing that it is considered important enough by God to be included in the canon of scripture, as a proof that such authority is necessary to perform the ordinances of the Gospel, and has existed whenever the Gospel has been upon the earth.

When we received the Priesthood, we probably took it for granted that the person ordaining us had the authority himself to perform that rite, just as he would have placed the same implicit trust in those who had given him that authority. We may have assured ourselves, or just out of interest asked to look at their Priesthood line, and undoubtedly found everything in order as it should be. We couldn't imagine someone who didn't have the Priesthood accidentally or intentionally performing an ordinance, or even setting apart or ordaining someone else. But we realize if such a thing did happen it wouldn't be considered valid, and would have to be redone, or the person the ordinance was performed upon might unknowingly try to perform it on someone else, and quickly a situation would occur where there would be a great number of people who believed they have the right authority but didn't actually hold it.

An Important Prophecy

A few years before the turn of the century, George Q. Cannon, a member of the First Presidency, felt impressed to make a prophesy on this subject and stress it's importance. He said, “I believe the time will come when it will be necessary for every man to trace the line in which he has received the Priesthood that he exercises. It is therefore of great importance in our Church that records should be kept, and that every man should know whence he derives his authority - from what source, through what channel he has received the holy Priesthood, and by what right he exercises that authority and administers the ordinances thereof. I

believe this is of extreme importance, and that where there are doubts as to a man's legitimately exercising that authority, that doubt should be removed. Every man should be careful on this point, to know where he gets his Priesthood; that it has come to him clean and undefiled, legitimately;"[1]

Our Responsibility

It is hard to imagine anyone disagreeing with his words, especially when we take into account the confusion that would result if there was any question over the validity of a persons ordination and any ordinances they have performed, and the difficulties that would follow as we've previously outlined. Sadly, although he laid great stress on accurate records being kept of ordinations, forms have been simplified to a point that, "With the limited information now being recorded, it is no longer possible to trace individual Priesthood authority lines."[2] And so the responsibility of ensuring that ordinances and ordinations are carried out with the correct authority lies with each individual Church member.

The Correct Method of Ordination

When a person is first ordained to an office within the Aaronic or Melchizedek Priesthood, the Priesthood Handbook outlines a specific order which must be followed: The person ordaining must lay their hands on the head of the recipient, and call them by name, stating the authority by which the ordinance is performed. The Priesthood is then conferred, if it has not been previously. Then, ordination to a specific office, bestowing all the rights, powers and authority pertaining to that office are given. Following which, words of counsel may be given as the Spirit dictates, and it is closed in the name of Jesus Christ. Within the living memory of most Church members, this format has changed very little, so were someone to diverge from it, they would immediately bring attention to themselves, and would almost definitely be corrected.

This pattern of ordination is essentially the same as it was in the Saviour's day. When John the Baptist ordained Joseph and Oliver, he said, "Upon my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah I confer the Priesthood of Aaron"[3] John added "that he acted under the direction of Peter, James, and John, who held the Priesthood of Melchizedek, which Priesthood he said, would in due time would be conferred on" them.[4] One thing was consistent on both occasions; the Priesthood was conferred first.

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1 18 October 1884, Journal of Discourses 26:24
2 Glenn N. Rowe, Director of Special Projects in the Church Historical Department, Ensign, July 1994, p. 67
3 29 May 1829, Joseph Smith-History 1:69; Doctrine and Covenants 13:1
4 Joseph Smith-History 1:72

No Priesthood Without Conferral

The Church was not organized until after the Priesthood was given, and until the Church existed there were no offices within it to specifically ordain anyone to. As a revelation later clarified, "All other authorities and offices in the Church are appendages to the Priesthood."[5] Brigham Young recalled that Joseph told him many times concerning ordinations, "Do not forget to confer the High Priesthood upon them."[6] Joseph had received the Priesthood by conferral, and gave strict instruction that a man should have the Priesthood conferred upon him, before being ordained to any offices therein.

An interesting question is, what if a person was ordained to an office without having the Priesthood conferred upon him? In other words, if someone is ordained an Elder (for example), but the person officiating forgets to give them the Priesthood by conferral, then has the person being ordained actually received the Priesthood? This is a question many members have raised to various Church leaders since: the Apostle, Abraham H. Cannon records in his journal, "A question was asked as to whether a man who held no Priesthood and on being ordained a Seventy [who] did not have the Melchizedek Priesthood conferred upon him, was really the possessor of the Priesthood? I maintained that it was necessary to say in the ordination that this was conferred upon him; otherwise he did not possess it."[7]

If Elder Cannon's words are not considered conclusive enough, President Joseph F. Smith, gave us a definitive answer; "the conferring of the Priesthood should precede and accompany ordination to office, unless it is possessed by previous bestowal and ordination. Surely a man cannot possess an appendage to the Priesthood without possessing the Priesthood itself, which he cannot obtain unless it be authoritatively conferred upon him."[8] This is a definitive answer, a man cannot hold a Priesthood office, without having the Priesthood conferred upon him.

A Change in Performing Ordinations

Who could disagree with the clear and simple teaching of Joseph, Brigham, and Joseph F. Smith? Interestingly, Charles W. Penrose, Counselor to President Smith, must have disagreed with him on this point, and said shortly after his death, "We have been making a mistake in ordinations. We have been conferring the Priesthood, and it ought not to be done. ... We should ordain directly to the office in the Priesthood."[9]

5 28 March 1835, Doctrine and Covenants 107:5
6 Deseret News, 6 June 1877
7 Abraham H. Cannon Journal, 20 March 1887
8 March 1901, Improvement Era 4:394
9 Stake Quarterly Conference, Utah Stake, Provo, Utah, 1919, as recollected by Daniel

Instead of correcting Penrose, Heber J. Grant implemented his views, and on the 23rd of April 1921 the First Presidency announced a new form of ordinations in which the words "confer upon you the Melchizedek Priesthood" were removed. How could such a thing happen?

How could the standard of ordination change? No revelation was given as justification. If the previous Prophets and Apostles would have considered such ordinations invalid, then what about those ordained without having the Priesthood conferred upon them, what were they to do? This change to the ordination policy raised many questions, but no answers were forthcoming. If this was the state of affairs up to the present day, then some might seriously question whether the Priesthood was lost completely, and only offices and callings in the Church remain. However Joseph was promised, "The Priesthood will never be taken away"[10] and so the Priesthood must have been maintained up to the present day, but how?

Prophecies Fulfilled

George Q. Cannon, upon whose prophesy we began this subject, also foresaw these events and their outcome, and said, "The day will come when men's Priesthood and authority will be called into question, and you will find out that there will be hundreds who have no Priesthood, but believe they hold it, they holding only an office in the Church."[11] President John Taylor, also seemed aware of the events that would take place, when he told a group of Saints, "I would be surprised if ten percent of those who claim to hold the Melchizedek Priesthood will remain true and faithful to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, at that time of the seventh President, and there would be thousands that think they hold the Priesthood at that time, but would not have it properly conferred upon them."[12] It is interesting that he said that these things would happen in the time of the seventh President of the Church, who of course was Heber J. Grant.

By 1955 at least one General Authority was beginning to teach that the Priesthood should be conferred. In the Summer of that year a member of the Church named Mont Woolley wrote to Joseph Fielding Smith, as there had been confusion among the Priesthood in his ward, about the method of ordination. President Smith replied that, "When your Bishop, or President of Stake, or anyone else, by appointment ordains a youth or man to the Priesthood he should confer the Priesthood, whether a Deacon or an Elder, and then ordain to the office

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R. Peay

10 Millennial Star 8:139, see D&C 84:17

11 1901, Draper, Utah, as related by Daniel R. Bateman

12 27 September 1886, John W. Woolley Home, Centerville, Utah. As related by Lorin C. Woolley

when the Priesthood is once conferred, it is not conferred again." Two years later, in the April of 1957, David O. McKay announced it's reinstatement.

Unauthorized Administrations

There are 36 years which cannot be easily explained away, between the time Heber J. Grant removed conferral of the Priesthood, and President McKay put it back again. If we are to believe all of the Presidents of the Church to the present day - except Heber & George A. Smith - then during that period the ordinations were invalid. If they were invalid, then those wrongly ordained do not hold the Priesthood, and any they ordained do not hold it either. As Brigham Young said, "No being can give that which he does not possess; consequently, no man can confer the Priesthood on another, if he has not himself first received it."[13] However surprisingly President McKay made no effort to ordering the re-conferral of the Priesthood on everyone ordained during that time, and the re-performance of every ordinance by anyone ordained during that time, and so the situation has worsened considerably.

Even though the evidence is before us, it doesn't make it any easier to accept it. We may have seen healings carried out, or felt the spirit during blessings, and wonder how this could happen, if in fact the power of the Priesthood was not involved. The book of Luke records how the Apostles came across a similar circumstance, and how the Saviour instructed them on this matter: "And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbad him, because he followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, Forbid [him] not: for he that is not against us is for us."[14] Jesus taught that signs such as healing, casting out evil spirits, etc., would follow those who believe, whether male or female, whether holding the Priesthood or not.[15] So, such gifts do not always indicate that someone has the authority to administer the ordinances of the Gospel, no matter how sincere their intent is, or how many spiritual experiences they have.

If we were to look at our own line of authority and notice that in it someone was ordained between 1921 and 1957 then it would raise a question over the validity of that ordination, and the Priesthood we hold (or possibly don't). Even if no-one in our line was ordained between that time, then we look at the authority of those who baptized or confirmed us, and who performed those ordinances on them, etc. John Taylor believed that, "If there be any doubt respecting the sufficiency of the ordination, [it would be] far better to remove it by giving him another ordination that will leave no room for question than to have disputes

13 History of the Church 4:257
14 Luke 9:49-50; Mark 9:39-40
15 Mark 16:17-18

about its validity."[16]

Authority Maintained

At the same meeting at which President Taylor made his prophesy that Priesthood would be incorrectly given, he set apart several of those present to ensure that the Priesthood, it's keys, and many of it's most important principles would be kept alive, anticipating that the Church would make many of the changes it later did. Those he ordained (including George Q. Cannon, and Joseph F. Smith) also were given the authority to ordain others to carry on the Priesthood and it's principles, so that there would never be a time when the Priesthood authority did not exist to keep alive the ordinances of the Gospel, and so that, in the prophetic words of Apostle Franklin D. Richards, "The Priesthood in the last days has to be manifested in sufficient power to bear off the Kingdom of God triumphant."[17]

Although the Lord before this point may have blessed us with a portion of His Spirit - because the intent of our heart was to do His will - with the knowledge we now possess, it is no longer enough to carry on as before. We are now left without any excuse, and will be accountable for what we have learnt. One of the most important ways we can uphold the Church, is by maintaining the foundation on which it was built, and perpetuating God's Priesthood and it's ordinances in the form in which He restored them. To do this we must ensure our Priesthood has come through an uninterrupted and untainted line, and seek out those who maintain such authority. Without taking this action there will always be doubt over the validity of the ordinances we have received and those we have performed, and the nagging question remaining of whether - when this life is over - we will find that our efforts have been acceptable before our Heavenly Father, or just been in vain.

16 Seventies Council Minutes, 30 March 1887
17 6 October 1853, Journal of Discourses 1:321

Addendum

Recently, our attention has been brought to a booklet by anti-Mormon-Fundamentalist, Brian C. Hales[18], in which he quotes George Q. Cannon's opinions on ordination in his attempt to disprove President John Taylor's prophesy that many members "would not have the Priesthood properly conferred upon them". Whilst it is true that there seemed to be a couple of alternative methods of ordination in use in the mid-1890s, and that President Cannon personally seemed to feel that either of them were valid, yet both of those methods made it clear that a person was being ordained into "the Melchizedek Priesthood"[19], and not "in the Church" as Heber J. Grant's revision states[20].

President Cannon would not have agreed with President Grant's alteration of the method of ordination, as Cannon stated that "care should be taken to bestow the authority", and gives the conferral of Priesthood upon Joseph and Oliver by John the Baptist as an ideal[21]. Brother Cannon also believed that the Lord could "direct exactly what should be said" "either by direct revelation or by inspiring his servants of the First Presidency"[22]. This happened in 1901 with Joseph F. Smith's declaration that the Priesthood must be conferred[23]. The standard was then set, and whatever ambiguity there may have been on the subject before that point, from that moment onwards any deviation from the method given by the Lord's prophet - such as the 1921 alterations - would not be approved by Him.

The removal of Priesthood conferral in ordination is only one area in which John Taylor's prophecy (and indeed the prophecy of Brother Cannon that our article began with) has been fulfilled. The revocation or alteration of any other ordinance can cause the withdrawal of Priesthood (or at least produces questions over its effectiveness) from those who sustain such changes or participate in such an altered Gospel. As an early Church publication put it, "... the priesthood can not continue when the gospel is perverted;"[24]. Whilst specific examples are beyond the scope of this particular treatment, yet many books and magazine articles have been written outlining such changes, and it remains up to us as faithful Latter-day Saints to personally receive and perpetuate the ordinances of God has He has given them, because as Joseph stated, "... that the ordinances must be kept in the very way God has appointed; otherwise their Priesthood will prove a cursing instead of a blessing."[25]

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18 Is Fundamentalism Fundamental?
19 Juvenile Instructor 29:114, 1894
20 Missionary Handbooks after 1921
21 Juvenile Instructor 31:174-5, 1896
22 Juvenile Instructor, 1894
23 Improvement Era 4:394
24 Times and Seasons, Nov. 15, 1841
25 TPJS, p 169

Your Obedient Servant Joseph

Polished shaft in the Almighty Hand
I am but yours to command
Arrow for your bow, I am sure and straight
and from your precepts will not deviate

Like a stone rolling down a hill
jarred and marred but carrying on still
I will yet be smooth as I keep on
holding fast to the foundation I've begun upon

Like a rudder, though small
directing through waves a ship so tall
through storms I will wend my way
to reach my port of call without delay

Should I be engulfed by the ocean waves swell
or face descending to the depths of hell
For my good my trials shall be
And all these experiences will prove good to me

And when at last I come to die
I will not flinch or ask Thee why
even through my flowing blood will I fulfil
my mission as witness to Thy will

Here should my mission now end?
No, beyond the veil I will work till called again
For I shall come forth yet to show
my work has not ended on this earth below

I will come again to Thy temple
and call the most faithful Saints to assemble
There instruct them in the way
they can help bring forth the millennial day

When I shall rule in my rightful place
along with all the heirs of Thy Son's grace
His laws will go forth in the land

And He will rule by His powerful hand

And all will await judgment, small and great
and no one will be able to escape their fate
Then all will see me for who I am
and know once and for all my part in the plan

Modern Music, Morality & The Gospel

Some of our readers may consider music to just be a background noise which has no effect on them, others may have noticed how different tunes can affect their moods, and how certain types of personalities often seem drawn to specific styles of music. But just as the Lord asks us to seek to judge people by their hearts rather than their looks, so too we must be careful by judging each other by the music they like. This does not mean, however, that we should not ask ourselves questions about what we listen to and what effect it might have on us.

Music has always existed, the voice is an instrument we all have, and which was probably once part of a heavenly chorus. David, King of Israel, played a harp, and the Psalms he wrote were the songs of his day. The angels sang to announce the birth of Jesus, and so too will there be trumpets and singing at His return. Yet there is no doubt that Satan can use music as an influence, and has used some popular singers to try to lead youth astray; by their fashion, their lifestyles, and the words of their songs.

However, the use of music by the Devil as an attempt to influence the Saints of God is not just a modern invention. An ancient apocryphal record called the book of Adam and Eve tells us of how Satan used music to tempt the Saints before the flood. It tells us how the people of God lived on a holy mountain, and that Jared, the father of Enoch, presided as prophet over them. While at the foot of the mountain the children of Cain lived in wickedness, and God's people were forbidden to associate with them.[1] Therefore, in order to corrupt those who followed Jared, Lucifer had to devise means to tempt them from a distance.

The leader of the Cain's descendants was Genun, the son of Lamech, and the ancient text reveals that "Satan came into him in his childhood; and he made sundry trumpets and horns, and string instruments, cymbals and psalteries, and lyres and harps, and flutes; and he played on them at all times and at every hour. And when he played on them, Satan came into them, so that from among them were heard beautiful and sweet sounds, that ravished the heart." *(2 Adam & Eve 20:2-3)*

What was the ultimate effect of such music? "When they played, it pleased well the children of Cain, who inflamed themselves with sin among themselves, and burnt as with fire; while Satan inflamed their hearts, one with another, and increased lust among them." *(v4)* This doesn't sound much different from the scene of many modern dance

1 "Then command again thy people not to hold intercourse [mix socially] with the children of Cain, and not to learn their ways; for I am God who loves not hatred and works of iniquity." 2 Adam & Eve 19:4 *(This slightly modernized version is based on the translation from the Arabic and Ethopian by Dr. S. C. Malan and Dr. E. Trumpp, as published in The Forgotten Books of Eden in 1927)*

clubs, does it? Satan added Alcohol into this musical mix, *(v. 5)* and had the children of Cain completely hooked. And what was the result of all this? "Sin increased among them greatly; until ... there was no more distinction of relationship, and they no longer knew what is iniquity; but did wickedly, and the earth was defiled with sin." *(v. 10)* Does this seem similar to our day at all?

Not content with their own descent into sin, they sought to have the Saints follow their ways, and to tempt them to do so: Therefore, "Genun gathered together companies upon companies, that played on horns and on all the other instruments we have already mentioned, at the foot of the Holy Mountain; and they did so in order that the children of Seth who were on the Holy Mountain should hear it. But when the children of Seth heard the noise, they wondered, and came by companies, and stood on the top of the mountain to look at those below; and they did thus a whole year." *(v. 11-12)* Were the followers of God oblivious to all this? No, curiosity began to get the better of them, and "at the end of that year, Genun saw that they were being won over to him little by little." *(v. 13)*

Satan had other ploys up his sleeve too. Fashion has often been associated with music,[2] and this was true in ancient times as well. "Satan entered into [Genun], and taught him to make dyeing stuffs for garments of divers patterns, and made him understand how to dye crimson and purple and what not. And the sons of Cain who wrought all this, and shone in beauty and gorgeous apparel, gathered together at the foot of the mountain in splendor, with horns and gorgeous dresses, ... committing all manner of abominations." *(v. 13-14)*

Over time the people on the mountain "relaxed from their fasting and praying" and weren't as keen to listen to the counsel of their prophet or parents, and "they kept on gathering together on the top of the mountain, to look upon the children of Cain, from morning until evening, and upon what they did, upon their beautiful dresses and ornaments." *(v. 16)*

The children of Cain saw they had attracted the attention they sought, and they called upon the Saints to come join them, and told them the way down from the mountain. *(v. 17-21)* At first they were still wary, and Jared warned them not to go, *(v. 22-23)* but a hundred of them wouldn't listen to his counsel, and "said among themselves, 'Come, let us go down to the children of Cain, and see what they do, and enjoy ourselves with them.' *(v. 24)* They didn't want to be left out of the party. Perhaps they reasoned thus: "Surely a few dances couldn't hurt? What really could be wrong with the pretty fashions they were wearing? Didn't the alcohol taste nice?" What was the reaction of God's prophet to this?

"But when Jared heard this of the hundred men, his very soul was moved, and his heart was grieved. He then arose with great fervor,

2 Trends such as gothic, punk, skater, heavy metal & hip hop.

and stood in the midst of them, and adjured them ... 'Let not one of you go down from this holy and pure mountain, in which our fathers have ordered us to dwell.'

But when Jared saw that they did not receive his words, he said unto them, 'O my good and innocent and holy children, know that when once you go down from this holy mountain, God will not allow you to return again to it ... for the moment you leave it, you will be bereft of life and of mercy; and you shall no longer be called 'children of God,' but 'children of the devil.' *(v. 25-27)*

Enoch too tried to warn his brothers and sisters, but they would not listen. But "when they looked at the daughters of Cain, at their beautiful figures, and at their hands and feet dyed with color, and tattooed in ornaments on their faces, the fire of sin was kindled in them. Then Satan made them look most beautiful before the sons of Seth, as he also made the sons of Seth appear of the fairest in the eyes of the daughters of Cain, so that the daughters of Cain lusted after the sons of Seth like ravenous beasts, and the sons of Seth after the daughters of Cain, until they committed abomination with them." *(v. 31-32)*

After this the Lord prevented them from returning up His holy mountain, for they had " lost or forsaken their own purity or innocence" *(v. 33-34)* Yet despite the continued pleading by Jared, the people continued to be tempted down the mountain by the rhythms of the music and the fashions they wore, and this continued "until only a few of them were left." *(21:1)*

Jared's grief was so great that it drove him to an early grave, yet before he died he called together Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, and counseled them, saying: "Ye are righteous, innocent sons; ... your children and your children's children have gone down ... and have estranged themselves from this holy mountain, through their abominable lust and transgression of God's commandment. ... But, O my sons, God will take you to a strange land, and ye never shall again return to behold with your eyes this garden and this holy mountain. *(21:4, 6)*

Enoch was able to keep some of the righteous Saints together in the city of Zion and they escaped from the earth before it became so wicked it had to be destroyed, and Noah was preserved with his family upon the ark when the Lord caused the flood. They knew the power of Satan's lures, and were preserved by keeping themselves segregated from the unrighteous world. As in their day we can only escape the spiritual destructions (and undoubtedly many of the physical ones too) by not giving in to influences that can lead us astray from the path God would have us follow.

Does this mean that we should avoid all music then? No, the Lord delights in musical talents being used to uplift, to praise God, and to celebrate all that is good in life. Such music is not always vocal, there is classical and other orchestral music, although even music without any

words can still carry a specific mood. There are inspired hymns, folks songs that tell funny tales, and ballads that talk of noble legends. There are songs of friendship and pure love, and ones that cause us to think. The Lord just asks us to think about what we let into our lives.

Many people do worry about particular styles of music being more of a bad influence. It is hard to disregard all of one type of music, as there are Christians musicians and singers for ever one of those styles who would undoubtedly attribute the inspiration for their music to God, and many of them use such music to praise God, or at least try to. Others though might argue that by using such modern tunes that they have already been influenced by singers and bands who received their promptings from a more Satanic source, and that if a person gets used to listening to Christian Rock they may be more likely to readily listen to other Rock bands whose beliefs and intents are very different indeed. Perhaps it just depends upon us as individuals to assess and form our own opinions on what God expects from us in this regard.

Whatever we choose to listen to let us take seriously the counsel of the scriptures to keep ourselves "unspotted from the world," *(James 1:27; D&C 59:9)* to avoid the very "appearance of evil," *(1 Thes 5:22)* and let us not seek after anything that is "carnal, sensual and devilish." *(Mosiah 16:3; Moses 5:13; 6:49)* We should ask ourselves "is it inspired of God, or does it inspire me to be better and do better?" Finally, let us always follow the admonition of Paul contained in our thirteenth article of faith, "If there is anything virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy, we seek after these things." *(AoF 13; Philip 4:8)*

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel

"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."

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Towards the Temple

During one of the periods of Israel's exile, they became subject to a decree outlawing devotion to anyone except Darius who had them in bondage, and so any form of worship (private or public) became a punishable offence. While those who had previously prayed toward idols turned their allegiance to the king and his edicts, Daniel defied the laws of man in preference to obeying God. With his windows wide open, he showed that he was not afraid of the arm of flesh, and drew out his heart to the Lord, petitioning Him that the way would be opened for the Israelites to return to their temple, its ordinances, and their former righteousness.

> Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God.[1]

For this the prescribed penalty was to be cast into a den of lions, but still he did not fear, he knew God would deliver him. What an example this serves to us, of standing apart from the world and for the things of God. We would be wise to follow the counsel of Joseph Smith when he instructed the twelve to cast their lot with men who, as the hymn says, 'Dare to be like Daniel'.

> Make yourselves acquainted with those men who like Daniel pray three times a day toward the House of the Lord.[2]

This raises the questions; “why was it so important for him (and us) to pay our devotion in the direction of the temple? Of what benefit can any earthly building be to us, in our communications with heaven?” We begin to comprehend the answer to these questions when we realize the purpose of the ordinances that take place in that edifice.

In God's house our hearts turn to our ancestors, and we have a natural concern to offer them the rites through which they may attain the blessings we have had in this life. Our love is also directed to our spouse and children with whom we hope to spend eternity. Still greater though than the work for the deceased, or the sealing to us of our family, is the preparation we are given that will enable us if diligent to come into the presence of God, not just in the next life but while in our mortal probation.

This area is often neglected when we speak of all the things we

1 Daniel 6:10

2 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith 161 (History of the Church 3:391)

think the temple is for, and yet it is the prime reason our Heavenly Father designed to have such a place built. Having Him place His hands upon us and confirming us heirs to all that He has is the most noble of aspirations, and when reached is the greatest attainment. The temple is the key to fulfilling 'the measure of our creation', and only through its doors can be opened all the knowledge and blessings that our Heavenly Father desires for us to receive.

So while the rest of the world seeks for material wealth, is it inappropriate that we should turn away from temporal corruptible things and seek the spiritual rewards and advancement that are offered through the house of the Lord? While there are still countries where dictators try to force allegiance and salutes to themselves and symbols of their power, we can voluntarily show our dedication and obedience to the very being who created the world on which we stand. Solomon recognized the power greater than him which was the influence behind the building of the temple in his day, and its dedication pleaded thus:

> Yet have thou respect unto the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer, which thy servant prayeth before thee to day: That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, [even] toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place. And hearken thou to the supplication of thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray toward this place: and hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place: and when thou hearest, forgive. If any man trespass against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to cause him to swear, and the oath come before thine altar in this house: Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness. When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house: Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers. When heaven is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, when thou afflictest them: Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, that thou teach them the good way wherein they should walk, and give rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance.

...

If thy people go out to battle against their enemy, whithersoever thou shalt send them, and shall pray unto the LORD toward the city which thou hast chosen, and [toward] the house that I have built for thy name: Then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. If they sin against thee, (for [there is] no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; [Yet] if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed wickedness; And [so] return unto thee with all their heart, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy name: Then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain their cause, And forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them compassion before them who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them.[3]

The temple is a divine symbol, a representation of all we seek and strive for. It may serve as an earthly habitation for celestial beings, or a vehicle for our communications with them, and as a place set aside for the receipt of revelation from the heavens. While the earth is in chaos, there we find order. While Satan offers us irresponsibility ending in unhappiness, we may find through keeping the covenants offered within the sacred confines a path to eternal joy.

We turn ourselves physically toward this Holy House, just as it obediently faces the point from which the greatest light is given, the Sun's morning glory, which appropriately rises to cast away the darkness which covers the inhabitants of the earth. So too, we must come before God, being pure and radiant, leaving no room within our spirits for any evil influence to hold sway over us. And should we fall short to what our Heavenly Father expects of us, if we direct ourselves to Him, with sorrow for our mistakes, and a determination to follow the principles we have promised to keep, then we can find forgiveness, reconciliation, and assistance, and go forward on the path He would have us take.

And when they turn their faces towards Zion, and bow down

3 1 Kings 8:28-50 (2 Chronicles 6:19-39)

> before thee and pray, may their sins never come up before thy face, neither have place in the book of thy remembrance.[4]

David both in the depth of sorrow, and when his soul was welled up in rejoicing, looked toward the temple for a source of his happiness, or healing from his troubles.

> But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy; and in fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.[5]

> Hear the voice of my supplications, when I cry unto thee, when I lift up my hands toward thy holy oracle.[6]

> I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.[7]

When Jonah was in the midst of trouble, he pleaded to the Lord for his escape in a similar manner:

> Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple....When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD; and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.[8]

There are men and women to whom the temple is not open at present, they being refused entry not because of unrighteousness, but because they seek to fulfill all of Gods laws despite others concessions to the gospel. They pray for the day when they will be able to again enter therein, and those who defile its sacredness will be removed. God has not forgotten them, and has promised that the day will soon come when these matters will be dealt with. Until that time though, He has given this consolation through he prophet Wilford Woodruff:

> Heavenly Father, when Thy people shall not have the opportunity of entering this holy house to offer this supplication unto thee, and they are oppressed and in trouble, surrounded by difficulties or assailed by temptation and shall turn their faces towards this Thy holy house and ask Thee for deliverance, for help, for Thy power to extend in their behalf, we beseech thee,

4 Prayer by Joseph Smith, December 10th, 1833, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith 37 (Unpublished Revelations 20:10)
5 Psalm 5:7
6 Psalm 28:2
7 Psalm 138:2
8 Jonah 2:4,7

to look down from Thy holy habitation in mercy and tender compassion upon them, and listen to their cries. Or when the children of Thy people, in years to come, shall be separated, through any cause, from this place, and their hearts shall turn in remembrance of Thy promises to this holy temple, and they shall cry unto Thee from the depths of their affliction and sorrow to extend relief and deliverance to them, hearken to their cries, and grant unto them the blessings for which they ask.[9]

9 Wilford Woodruff, Dedicatory Prayer of the Salt Lake Temple, Contributor 14:292 (House of the Lord 70, James E. Talmage)

Who Judges the Prophets?

It is a common belief amongst many Church members that the Church President is incapable of publicly making mistakes on matters of doctrine, as the Lord would take his life before he did so. They believe that this is what Wilford Woodruff meant, when he told the Saints, "the Lord will not permit me or any other man who stands as President of the Church to lead you astray. ... If I were to attempt that, the Lord would remove me out of my place, and so he will any other man who attempts to lead the children of men astray from the oracles of God and from their duty."[1]

There are many Latter-day Saints, however, who would reject such an interpretation, as they believe that it renders the President of the Church perfect, to the point where he cant make mistakes, or without sufficient free agency to do so. The concept of a religious leader being incapable or prevented from making doctrinal errors is known as infallibility, and has been an accepted belief of the Catholic Church since 1870: "Catholics believe the Pope, be he saint or sinner, is preserved by God from leading the church into doctrinal error. This is referred to as his infallibility."[2]

Such a belief has been condemned by latter-day Prophets of God, such as John Taylor, who said: "No person was ever dismissed from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for disbelieving in the infallibility of President Young. I do not believe he is infallible, for one; and I have so taught publicly. I am in the Church yet. Neither have I ever heard President Young make any such pretensions."[3] Indeed Joseph Fielding Smith, Jr., went as far as saying that, "infallibility is a fabrication devised by the powers of darkness to act as a counterfeit for revelation."[4]

President Woodruff's statement, however, is not clear or definite enough by itself to support the claim that he was trying to convince the Saints that he was infallible, although those antagonistic to Mormonism often level that charge. His words do not clarify what would be necessary to lead the Saints astray, or whether he refers only to someone leading most or all of them away. Many people do indeed set out with the intention of leading Saints away from the Church, and many seem to succeed in this. Yet Brother Wilford's words say that "any other man who attempts to lead the children of men astray" will be removed out of their place. However, we do not see even 'successful' anti-Mormons being removed from this life, although we would undoubtedly see them

1 General Conference, 6 October 1890, p. 2
2 Religions of America, Leo Rosten, p. 43
3 John Taylor Papers, 1:259
4 Religious Truths Defined, p. 183

removed from membership in the Church, or at least the privileges thereof. We might also wonder too whether his remarks refer just to Church members, or to all "the children of men".

This leaves us with the question of what 'place' would a Church President (or any one else) be removed from if they were to attempt to "lead the children of men astray"? Interestingly the scriptures describe the results of the President of the Church himself falling or failing in his mission, and the result of such a course. From the Old Testament to the Doctrine and Covenants the Lord has given examples and outlined procedures to follow when such a sad event occurs.

There are certainly examples of Prophets being literally killed by God for disobedience and unrighteousness. The Lord warned the ancient Israelites of how he would destroy fallen prophets, and also how he would punish them for following such prophets:

> "And if the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the LORD have deceived that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel.
>
> And they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity: the punishment of the prophet shall be even as the punishment of him that seeketh [unto him];
>
> That the house of Israel may go no more astray from me, neither be polluted any more with all their transgressions; but that they may be my people, and I may be their God, saith the Lord God."[5]

It seems then that the ancient Saints had the individual responsibility of finding out for themselves whether their prophet had fallen, and if they did not recognize this and continued to follow, then they were liable to be held accountable for doing the wrong things their leader had told them to do. An official Church publication from the last century warned the Saints then of making the same mistake: "We have heard men who hold the Priesthood remark, that they would do anything that they were told to do by those who presided over them, even if they knew it was wrong: but such obedience is worse than folly to us; it is slavery in the extreme;"[6]

Joseph Smith referred to such a time in the Bible when the people of God placed too much confidence in their leaders, and that they "were darkened in their minds," because, "they were depending on the Prophet."[7] Likewise, his successor, Brigham Young told of the results of continuing mindlessly upon such a path and how to avoid the possibility,

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5 Ezekiel 14:9-11, See Deuteronomy 18:20 & Isaiah 9:15-16

6 Millennial Star 14:594, 1852

7 Teachings, p. 237

"How easy it would be for your leaders to lead you to destruction," he said, "unless you actually know the mind and will of the Spirit yourselves."[8] And should the Saints not judge for themselves, with the Spirit, the truthfulness of what they were taught? "Without taking this course, a people or nation is liable to be led astray by their leaders" And the solution? "when the people understand for themselves - when they know and understand the things of God by the Spirit of revelation, they are not only satisfied, but safe."

So the responsibility lies with us to judge for ourselves whether we are being led along the right path, and to be watchful and mindful, and to have the Spirit with us that we will know the very moment someone is trying to lead us in another direction than the path God wants us to follow. We have seen from the examples and counsel given that we cannot wait for a prophet to be removed before finding out whether they are in the process of trying to lead us astray. We have also read the remarks of two of the founding Prophets of this dispensation stating that such a situation is possible in our own day.

> "For it shall come to pass that the inhabitants of Zion shall judge all things pertaining to Zion. And liars and hypocrites shall be proved by them, and they who are not apostles and prophets shall be known."[9]

The Fate of those Who Seek to Lead the Saints Astray

Scriptural examples of the Lord removing false prophets from this life are also complemented by other passages in which God has allowed them to live and carry on their work, and give some indications of why He has done this. Thus showing that the Lord does not always remove a Prophet at the point they will lead the Saints astray, and sometimes there is a purpose in mind behind some of God's people mistakenly veering off the path of righteousness. Their punishment may be more gradual than immediate death, but eventually they will receive the chastising hand of the Lord.

> "Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall himself into his own pit:"[10]

There is a fate worse than death to a false prophet and to those people who follow him, which is the loss of one of the greatest gift God granted them in this life - revelation. He is without true direction, as are his followers, who wander in the wilderness. Joseph himself was warned

8 Journal of Discourses, p. 438
9 D&C 64:38-39
10 Proverbs 28:10, see Jeremiah 23:11-12

that if he failed in his mission this gift would be taken from him: "Except thou do this, thou shalt be delivered up and become as other men, and have no more gift."[11] Joseph would have perhaps remained in his Church office for a little while, as our Heavenly Father does not speak of him dying, although he would lack the power of revelation, and be removed from his 'place' as Prophet, at least as far as the heavens are concerned. As Micah says of such a man, "ye shall not have a vision .. for there is no answer of God."[12] Which explains the statement of President Woodruff regarding any man who should seek to lead the Saints astray; they shall have their spiritual gifts removed, and their 'place' in the heavens will become vacant.

Some might suppose that the Saints would quickly be informed of such a result, but the Lord has given us the responsibility to judge, and should we judge wrongly we must learn the result of our actions, and so we may continue following someone who is no longer following God's word and will. When this is what the people want, the Lord allows it, and if we look around the world today we will see many people following their own false prophets. None of us are exempt from this danger if we do not maintain a continuing witness of who the Prophet of the Lord is and if he remains so.

Others could still argue that the Lord would not allow such an occurrence in our day, yet, speaking of our day it was prophesied that, "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."[13] In other words, he will allow people to believe what they want to, to receive what they want if they ask for it enough, and to have messages from the Adversary if they will not receive and take heed to what he has to say. As Brother Brigham reminded the Saints, "if they would not believe the revelations that God had given, He would suffer the Devil to give revelations that they - priests and people - would follow after. ... if they would not have the truth they would have error sent to them, and they would believe it."[14] In fact the Lord has on occasion given His people what they have desired even when it is against His will:

> "But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them."[15]

Safeguards and Guidelines

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11 D&C 3:11
12 Micah 3:5-7
13 2 Thessalonians 2:11
14 Deseret News, 18 June 1871, p. 308
15 1 Samuel 8:6-7, See Jeremiah 5:31

However, the Lord has provided other safeguards and guidelines to help us ensure that we remain faithful to him, whilst supporting those leaders He appoints when necessary to do so. He has given us a canon of his sacred word which we are in the habit of calling the standard works. Within it's volumes are contained the selected words of many prophets that are considered to be relevant to us today for instruction, example, encouragement, and to enable us to judge the truth. President Joseph Fielding Smith gave it as the standard by which the Saints could judge his words: "If I ever say anything which is contrary to the scriptures, then the scriptures prevail."[16] And in this statement he was but mirroring the views of Joseph Smith himself: "If any man will prove to me by one passage of holy writ, one item I believe to be false, I will renounce it [and] disclaim it as far as I have promulgated it."[17]

Joseph stands in a unique position amongst latter-day Prophets, he is the head of this dispensation, and presides over the Priesthood keys for it. His teachings are also a standard by which to judge his successors in the office of Church President. For he warned, "if any man preach any other Gospel than that which I have preached, he shall be cursed;"[18] And told the Saints, "I never told you I was perfect; but there is no error in the revelations which I have taught."[19]

So the teachings and revelations from the first prophet of this dispensation serve as a foundation stone on which the Church was built, and so the Church and its members will not succeed in building up Gods kingdom if they try to build upon anything other than that firm foundation. Disagreement between present and past leaders then is a sure test of whether their remarks are made by revelation or are personal opinion, as Brigham Young points out:

> "Do you know why some men give counsel different one from another? Because they undertake to give counsel without the Spirit of the Lord to dictate them. But when the Spirit dictates, then each one knows what to do, and their counsel will be the same. Adam, Seth, Enoch, Noah, all the Patriarchs and Prophets, Jesus and the Apostles, and every man that has ever written the word of the Lord, have written the same doctrine upon the same subject; and you never can find that prophets and Apostles clashed in their doctrines in ancient days; neither will they now, if all would at all times be led by the Spirit."[20]

So, if a modern Church President should contradict a doctrine revealed through the scriptures or his predecessors then it will be

16 Church News, 23 August, 1975
17 Words of Joseph Smith, 15 Oct 1843; Teachings, p. 327
18 Joseph Smith, Historical Record 7:548, see Words of Joseph Smith, 12 May 1844
19 Teachings, p. 368
20 Journal of Discourses 5:329

apparent that he is speaking as a man, rather than a revelator regarding that point, whatever else he might be inspired upon. This is an important test which several passages of scripture and quotes from prophets testify to:

> "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word,[it is] because [there is] no light in them."[21]
>
> "And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets."[22]
>
> ..
>
> "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."[23]
>
> "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrines which ye have learned; and avoid them."[24]
>
> "The gospel in its simplicity, is to be found in the revelations, the teachings of the prophet and the early leaders of the Church. We shall make no mistake if we follow them."[25]
>
> "How, it may be asked, was this known to be a bad angel? by his contradicting a former revelation."[26]
>
> "The Holy Ghost does not contradict its own revealings. Truth is always harmonious with itself."[27]
>
> "None of the revelations of the prophets either past or present have been repealed ... These revelations received by our prophets and seers are all of God, and we cannot repeal or disannul them without making God out a liar, and God cannot lie."[28]

A prophet is a Prophet "only when he was acting as such"[29]. Even the Church President when acting as President of the Church is not always acting as a Prophet. Does he need a revelation to restate a policy,

21 Isaiah 8:20
22 1 Corinthians 14:32
23 Galatians 1:6,8
24 Romans 16:17
25 Pres. J. Reuben Clark, Immortality & Eternal Life, p. 156
26 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 214
27 First Presidency Message, Joseph F. Smith, 2 August 1913
28 Lorenzo Snow, Smoot Investigation, 1904, 1:8
29 Joseph Smith, Teachings, p. 278

or to tell the Saints to keep the commandments God has already given? We should remember that he is also a representative of the Church and it's members, as well as the Lord, and will sometimes be their spokesman as well as His. The Church President is also someone who has opinions, which the Lord does not prevent him from sharing. As President of the Seventy and Church Historian, B.H. Roberts pointed out:

> "We believe in an inspired Priesthood for the Church; we believe in inspired teachers; but that does not require us to believe that every word that is spoken from the pulpit is the very word of God. Sometimes they speak merely from their human knowledge, influenced by passions; influenced by interests of men, and by anger, and vexation, and all those things that surge in upon the minds of every servant of God. When they so speak, then that is not scripture; that is not the word of God, nor the power of God unto salvation; but when they speak as moved upon by the Holy Ghost, their voice then becomes the voice of God."[30]

The only way we know if he is acting as a Prophet is if: a) he reveals the words of the Lord, b) he states that a particular course of action or direction is the will of the Lord, c) he does not contradict the scriptures or revelations from his predecessors, d) the Spirit witnesses to us that what he has said is true. Although it does not necessarily follow that because we feel the Spirit accompanying his sermon that his words are a revelation to the whole Church. I am sure that most of us have heard talks from other Latter-day Saints in our ward or branch, and thought to ourselves, "the Lord wanted me to hear that."

Unless there is a direct statement that what he says is the word of the Lord, then whatever else we may assume or feel about it, it remains only a personal assumption that he was acting as a Prophet instead of as a representative of the Church, encouraging us to keep the commandments and avoid evil like any other Church member would. First Presidency member, Charles Penrose, went even further, "President Wilford Woodruff is a man of wisdom and experience, and we respect him, but we do not believe his personal views or utterances are revelations from God; and when 'Thus saith the Lord' comes from him, the Saints investigate it: they do not shut their eyes and take it down like a pill."[31] He was not alone in his remarks, but was expanding on the counsel of the Prophet Joseph, who taught, "If anything should have been suggested by us, or any names mentioned, except by

30 Defense of the Truth, 2:456

31 Charles Penrose, Millennial Star 54:191

commandment, or thus saith the Lord, we do not consider it binding."[32]

President Hinckley has gone to pains to point this out. For example when he warned people about the need to prepare for emergencies and get out of debt (and what could happen if they didn't) he stated, "this is not a prophecy". When speaking about whether he had personally received any revelations, he maintained that, "We don't need much revelation," and "We don't need a lot of continuing revelation"[33] President Hinckley has also seemed to admit that there are times he is uncertain of his communications with his Father in heaven when he said, "I think He answers my prayers, ... I think He answers them." Nor does he pretend to know all things, even on matters of doctrine. For example, when asked about why blacks weren't allowed to have the Priesthood previously, he stated, "I don't know what the reason was."

There lies with us the personal responsibility to judge the President of the Church, although we should seek to not be judgmental towards other members views about what he has said or done, nor feel obligated to share a similar view. We must realize also that being in a position to judge does not mean that we are in a position of authority, or that our judgments do not come without consequences, as the Lord spoke of the need to not judge unrighteously. We must remain respectful of the office and authority he does hold.

The Old Testament records that on one occasion the Lord actually instructed the a Prophet to tempt one of the tribes of Israel with wine, but they held firm to the covenants they had made, and disobeyed the Prophet, and were blessed by God for doing so. President Lorenzo Snow related this story to the Saints in his day:

> "I will refer again to the Rechabites, and the strong temptation that they were under when invited to the Temple of God, and there, in one of the apartments, asked by Jeremiah, one of the greatest prophets, to drink wine; or, in other words, to do something they had been instructed by their father not to do. But they could not be moved, the teaching of their father had found an abiding place in their hearts, and the consequence was that they utterly refused to do what the Prophet of God told them to do. The Lord Himself admired the course that they took in this matter and was led as I before said, to make such a glorious promise to the house of Rechab;"[34]

Would we have the same courage to stand up for a true principle no matter what a leader might ask of us, or whatever decision the majority took? Joseph had such courage, and proclaimed, "I will always maintain

32 Joseph Smith, History of the Church 3:295

33 Interviews, San Francisco Chronicle & Compass TV Show, 13 April 1997 & 9 November 1997

34 Lorenzo Snow, Journal of Discourses 23:192, See Jeremiah 35

a true principle, even if I stand alone in it."[35]

Whilst the current President of the Church is undoubtedly a man of integrity and wisdom, we should also remember not to put our trust in him as a man, for even he could fall or fail in moral or ethical matters. The scriptures even describe the procedure for trying him in a disciplinary council should he do so.[36] It is not man we should put our trust in, not trust in the "arm of flesh" that the sacred canon warns us against,[37] but in God alone, and everyone and everything else should be put to the test, and should never be trusted above what God has stated.

Ultimately, the heads of homes, holding the Priesthood, and presiding over their families, should be revelators to their children and wives. Being worthy to administer the blessings of the Gospel, and to be a Christ-like example. Every individual will need to know and discern the voice of the Spirit for themselves if they hope to be exalted, for "no man can live on borrowed light."[38]

> "And Moses said unto him, Enviest thou for my sake? would God that all the LORD'S people were prophets, [and] that the LORD would put his spirit upon them!"[39]
>
> "God has not revealed anything to Joseph, but what He will make known unto the twelve, and even the least Saint may know all things as fast as he is able to bear them."[40]
>
> "We often hear it said that the living Oracles must be in the Church in order that the Kingdom of God may be established and prosper on the earth. I will give another version of this sentiment. I say that the living Oracles of God, or the Spirit of revelation must be in each and every individual, to know the plan of salvation and keep in the path that leads them to the presence of God."[41]

35 Teachings, p. 332
36 D&C 107:81-82
37 2 Nephi 4:34, 28:31
38 Life of Heber C. Kimball, Orson F. Whitney, 1888 ed., p. 461; Conference Report, April 1906, p. 76
39 Numbers 11:29
40 Joseph Smith, Teachings, p. 149
41 Discourses of Brigham Young, p. 58

The Poet and the Prophet

(Joseph Smith and Eliza R. Snow)

When told that you and he should wed
And from Emma it had to be concealed
Did you suppose he may of been mislead
Until God to you His will revealed?

When receiving the sealing upon your head
Were you nervous as you held his hand?
As words of affirmation were being said
Did you wonder if Emma would understand?

And when confronted by his wifes wrath
Did you hope she would accept or tolerate?
But unable to avoid having to speak at last
You sadly found she wouldn't accommodate

Then, when you saw his life's blood gone
Unable to show your grief, hiding the tears
Did you then wonder if you could go on?
Finding you were faced by new found fears

Taking solace that you were among friends
You found the strength to start anew
Your husbands work hadn't reached an end
And to his testimony you were still true

Whilst Emma denied Joseph's quorum of wives
And lead her sons from principles astray
Your life was a testimony that she lied
And yet the truth you still could not say

Then you found comfort by Brigham's side
You married again, but only for mortality
And your new love you didn't have to hide
Though still sealed to Joseph for eternity

When the law was proclaimed from the pulpit
You were called to lead from the stand
As the prophet's wife, not having to hide it
To fight a war against the laws of the land

Openly living what your husband died for

Your marriage to Joseph recognised finally
Called to high and holy office once more
Presiding over the sisters in Relief Society

And at last you shall rejoin him you love
As Christ returns the world will know
That he was sent by God from heaven above
And all who live the law to heaven will go

Abortion – The New Holocaust

When we think of the greatest crimes against humanity in recent times, scenes such as the Nazi concentration camps of the Second World War and the killing fields of Cambodia come to mind. When millions of innocents are slaughtered because they are deemed less than human our reaction is usually one of horror, yet one such abhorrent act has become not just common place, but also widely accepted in our society – the practice of aborting unborn children.

Abortion is not a modern phenomenon, although it was probably not as widespread in earlier times as it has become in our day. It was an issue of sufficient importance to the ancient physicians of Greece for them to promise "I will not give to a woman an instrument to produce abortion."[1] as part of their Hippocratic oath, and for the earliest Christians who considered it a commandment that, "thou shalt not murder a child by abortion nor kill them when born"[2].

As early as the middle of the last century, Latter-day Saints publicly declared their opposition to abortion, whilst most of America at the time would of rather swept the subject under the carpet, it's leaders declared in no uncertain terms that they consider it to be murder: President John Taylor spoke of "pre-natal murders", leaving no doubt that he believed that those who killed a child whilst within the womb were guilty of murder[3], and his counselor President George Q. Cannon later testified, "I tell you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that any woman who commits this horrible sin will be damned, just as sure as God lives."*[4]

Such an attitude existed within the Church at least up until the first couple of decades of this century, as can be seen from Elder Joseph Fielding Smith's remarks on the subject, that, "It is just as much murder to destroy life before as it is after birth, although man-made laws may not so consider it; but there is One who does take notice and his justice and judgment is sure."[5]. When asked for a written response to the statements of Elder Smith, the First Presidency responded, "We give our unqualified endorsement to these articles, … and commend the sentiments contained therein to members and non-members of the Church … everywhere."[6]

When David O. McKay became Church President, however, this policy changed remarkably, as one can read for themselves: "As the matter stands today, no definite statement has been made by the Lord

1 Collier's National Encyclopaedia 5:267
2 Didache 2:2, also Epistle of Barnabus 19:5
3 Journal of Discourses 20:355
4 Collected Discourses 2, 5 October 1890
5 Relief Society Magazine 3:367-8, July 1916
6 Relief Society Magazine, IV:2, February 1917, p. 68

one way or another regarding the crime of abortion. So far as is known, He has not listed it alongside the crime of the unpardonable sin and shedding of innocent human blood. That He has not done so would suggest that it is not in that class of crime and therefore that it will be amenable to the laws of repentance and forgiveness."

This stance became even more liberal when Spencer W. Kimball presided over the Church: "The church opposes abortion and counsels its members not to submit to or perform an abortion except in the rare cases where, in the opinion of competent medical counsel, the life or good health of the mother is seriously endangered or where the pregnancy was caused by rape and produces serious emotional trauma in the mother. Even then it should be done only after counselling with the local presiding priesthood authority and after receiving divine confirmation through prayer."[7]

Whilst the feminist element within the Church was probably overjoyed by such concessions being granted them, yet for many faithful Saints their reaction would have been one of sadness or confusion. It was not the Mormons alone for whom such a statement caused disappointment, the President of the American Life League, the worlds biggest and most respected anti-abortion charity, felt impressed to write to the leaders of the Church to express her upset:

December 4, 1995

American Life League, Inc.
National Headquarters: P.O. Box 1350
Stafford, VA 22555

The First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve
47 East South Temple Street
Salt Lake City, UT 84150

Dear Friends,

I recently received a copy of the Bishops [General] Handbook [of Instructions], page 11-4, which provides a statement of abortion. I presume that this statement is the official policy of the Mormon Church, and it is extremely troubling, to say the least.

One must know, as you do, that God is the Author of life, and that the child is always an innocent human being, regardless of how that child is conceived. Thus I cannot comprehend your position that abortion is allowed in the cases of rape and incest. Abortion is always murder, it is always an offense against God and, as you state in the initial paragraph of your policy, it is "one of the most revolting and sinful practices of this day."

Second, why would you permit eugenic abortion to be practiced on children simply because of "severe defects that will not allow the

7 Church News, Jan. 27, 1973, p. 7

baby to survive beyond birth?" God does not make mistakes, and it is clear that if a mother is carrying a child with diagnosed problems her role become even more pertinent and poignant for the very short life of her soon to be born child. Thus I do not see how your position could possibly be consistent with your teaching.

Finally, we know that there is absolutely no medical reason for a woman to seek the death of her baby because of a threat to her life or health.

Gentlemen, I hope and pray that you will reconsider your policy statement. It is inconsistent and, if you will, fatally flawed.

Sincerely yours in the Lord of Life,

(Mrs.) Judie Brown, President

It is also the prayer of this author and many faithful orthodox and fundamentalist Latter-day Saints that the day will come when such a sin as abortion will not be so easily excused away, and so readily forgiven, but will be treated with the seriousness and sacredness that a human life – no matter how young – deserves.

"It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck,
and he cast into the sea,
than that he should offend [hurt] one of these little ones."[8]

**A personal insight – whilst serving as a missionary my companion and I befriended and discussed the gospel with a woman who had left the Church many years early. During the time she was away from the faith, and whilst she was still single, she became pregnant, and the so-called friends she associated with convinced her that the child would "ruin her life", and that it would be a small matter to have an abortion. She did so, and has never had a peaceful night of sleep since, as her dreams have been filled with the haunting vision her aborted child screaming. Perhaps if the man responsible for making her pregnant would have been more willing to take responsibility for his action, and offer to assist in the care and upbringing of the child then maybe such a regrettable course could have been avoided. No doubt the male party in such a situation shares as much if not greater guilt, along with those who would encourage such an act to take place that has ruined a dear woman's life and put her salvation in jeopardy.*

8 Luke 17:2, Matt. 18:6, Mark 9:42

"As Man Now Is, God Once Was"

> "The most renowned of all the Prophet's sermons was given at general conference in April 1844 as a funeral address in honour of his friend King Follett who had died in a construction accident. Joseph Smith spoke for over two hours mentioning at least thirty-four doctrinal subjects, including the importance of knowing the true God ... One of his most profound messages concerned God and man's destiny in relationship to him. He declared, 'God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens!' ..."[1]

The above paragraph comes from an official Church manual used in its Institute of Religion programme, and as such we might assume that what Joseph Smith taught on that occasion could be regarded as official Church doctrine, but as those who have read this periodical before have probably already recognized; that what may have once been considered current L.D.S. teachings can change almost overnight to being no longer approved, and may be relegated to being classed among opinions, speculation, or theories.

Such a reversal of position seems to be beginning to happen regarding the doctrine that God the Father was once a man. Some of our readers may as yet be unaware of the indications that this is taking place and so for their benefit we produce below some of the remarks President Gordon B. Hinckley has recently made on the subject at hand:

Repudiation Of Doctrine That God Was Once A Man
By President Gordon B. Hinckley

> "Q: ... For instance, don't Mormons believe that God was once a man?
>
> A: I wouldn't say that. There was a little couplet coined, 'As man is, God once was. As God is, man may become.' Now that's more of a couplet than anything else. That gets into some pretty deep theology that we don't know very much about."[2]

> President Gordon B. Hinckley says the concept of God having been a man is not stressed any longer, but he does believe that human beings can become gods in the afterlife.[3]

> On whether his church still holds that God the Father was once a man, he sounded uncertain, "I don't know that we teach it. I don't know that we emphasize it. ... I understand the philosophical background behind it, but I don't know a lot about it, and I don't think

1 Church History in the Fullness of Times, p. 261, 1989.
2 San Francisco Chronicle, Don Lattin, Chronicle Religion Writer, 13 April 1997
3 Richard Ostling, Online Newshour Focus, 18 July 1997

others know a lot about it."[4]

Although President Hinckley has not commented directly on the above quotes, nor given any public explanation of his beliefs on this doctrine to the Church, yet in the recent General Conference he did remark that, "I personally have been much quoted, and in a few instances misquoted and misunderstood. I think that's to be expected. None of you need worry because you read something that was incompletely reported. You need not worry that I do not understand some matters of doctrine. I think I understand them thoroughly, and it is unfortunate that the reporting may not make this clear."[5]

If Gordon B. Hinckley has ever been misquoted, it must have been on a an issue other than that of God having once been a man, as on three different occasions he made very similar statements, to different reporters of respected publications. Let us compare President Hinckley's statements on this doctrine to those of the Prophet Joseph Smith in his famous King Follett sermon:

> "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man ... He was once a man like us; ... God Himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ did;"[6]

President Hinckley answers that he "wouldn't say that" God was once a man. Despite the fact that the doctrine was printed in official Church manuals eight years earlier, yet he seems unsure whether the Church teaches it or not, or as he puts it "I don't know that we teach it." It seems from Joseph's sermon that he was certain about what he was teaching and left us in no doubt as to what he meant, and yet Brother Hinckley doesn't seem to share the same testimony, or, as he puts it, "I don't know a lot about it." The question remains: why doesn't Brother Hinckley want the doctrine stressed, and how did something which was accepted and understood for so long become suddenly shrouded in mystery and questioned?

When Lorenzo Snow received the truth of God's previous mortality, he phrased it in the following words, "As man now is, God once was; As God now is, man may be." As President of the Church, he recollected that, "Nothing was ever revealed more distinctly than that was to me."[7] Yet Brother Hinckley refers to what Lorenzo Snow spoke of as a revelation, as just "more of a couplet than anything else". Yet this couplet was cited by the majority of the Presidents of the Church up to the present day, and Joseph Fielding Smith once said, after quoting it, that "This same doctrine has of course been known to the prophets of all the ages."[8] Why then does President Hinckley say, "I don't know a lot about it"! We will leave our

4 Time Magazine, "Kingdom Come", David Van Biema, Reported by S.C. Gwynne & Richard N. Ostling, 4 August 1997

5 October 1997, General Conference.

6 7 April 1844, Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 345-46

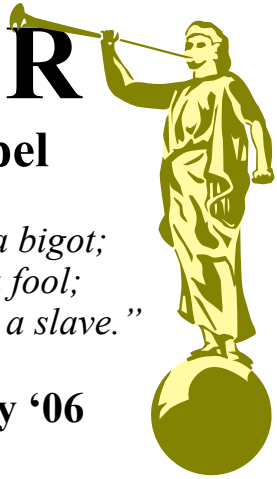
7 Church History in the Fullness of Times, p. 452.

8 Joseph Fielding Smith, General Conference, 14 May 1971.

readers to answer that question.

MESSENGER

Of the Fullness of the Gospel



"He that will not reason is a bigot;
He that cannot reason is a fool;
and he that dare not reason is a slave."

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How Firm a Foundation

Often as members of the Church when we are asked how might a person gain a testimony and we respond by directing them to the Book of Mormon, asking them to read and pray about it, saying that by that means they will have gained a witness of all the other principles we believe.

What many of us are not aware of is actually how many groups have arisen claiming Joseph Smith as their founder, and even using the same scriptures as we do. Over one hundred and fifty such groups have formed in just as many years, about a third of which are still functioning today.

Their beliefs on authority and doctrine differ tremendously, and it makes us wonder why they don't see how obvious it is that they have departed from the original teachings, and yet they think the same about us.

We sometimes ask others to put behind them their assumptions and try to understand our position, to put to the test the principles we believe in, and expect them to come to the same conclusions, yet sadly we usually find they don't.

Just as much as we expect others to study the things we feel to be true, we also owe them the time to look into their views and examine them, that we might better realize their perspective, so we are more able to appreciate their stand, and better prepared to reason with them and defend our own faith.

Even within our wards and stakes there are unseen divisions among the members. There are those who are very orthodox in their approach, looking solely to their leaders for direction on how they should act in their lives, and on the other hand many who are quite liberal, not feeling required to accept anything they do not feel comfortable with.

One group of people we may not be so acquainted with are the Fundamentalists, and yet many of those who attend the same Church meetings and activities as us may fit into that category, and we would not think of them as such. So what is it that makes them different? Simply that they have recognized or received a testimony to the effect that the perfect gospel restored through Joseph Smith cannot be changed, and that all of it is as essential for our salvation now as it was in his day.

It may well surprise other Church members to find out that many of the doctrines, commandments and ordinances originally revealed through the Prophet Joseph are no longer taught by their leaders. The question arises; if they were once considered essential to our salvation why has their practice ceased?

God gives to us all the freedom to choose to what extent we will

follow Him, not everyone is as willing to serve Him in all He asks, at all costs, and yet there are always those few who will. The voice of the people of the Church on what the majority of them will accept, or wish to reject, has always had a bearing on how much the Lord will extend to them.

(If I were to offer you a gift and you were to refuse it, this would not mean that it would no longer be available, but you would have to show your sincerity before being able to receive it again, or it might as well be given to someone who would appreciate it more.)

On many occasions history shows that principles have been altered where a great number of the people have not been prepared for them, and yet does this mean that we must forgo the blessings? No, this being the last dispensation God has promised that His laws and ordinances will always be available for the righteous to follow.

Where is this evidence to be found? If it is in your heart to serve the Lord and seek his truth above everything else, that you will not settle for anything less, then be assured you will be led by the Spirit to find the truth about these things, and will not be disappointed.

Declaration of Beliefs

[The following has been proposed by the authors of this introduction as a general statement of their personal beliefs, which they intended to also reflect general principles accepted by the majority of Mormon Fundamentalists.]

So that the Fundamentalist position may be better understood we have decided to include a short synopsis of our beliefs, not to replace the Articles of Faith, for we firmly believe in them, but to clarify our position in relation to the Church:

We believe in Joseph Smith, the Prophet through whom the Fullness of the Gospel was restored to the earth, never to be taken away again. He died a martyr for the truth, fulfilling perfectly his life's mission, having taught all those things necessary to bring mankind to their salvation.

We believe that all the doctrines, principles, covenants, laws and ordinances revealed through him are essential, unalterable and irrevocable. They must be lived at all costs, in all circumstances (excepting unrighteousness), and against any adversary which may oppose them.

We believe that no man can carry on the work of Joseph by departing from the foundation he laid, and that a true successor will perpetuate the same teachings, and not divert away from them. Contradictions being a sure sign of departure from the correct path.

We believe that the Church was organized by God through His Priesthood for the purpose of gathering those people who believe in the

first principles of the Gospel, and for spreading that message to all the inhabitants of the Earth. It may take action against those who commit sin, but not restrict the individuals right to disagree, and believe as they choose.

We believe that its members have the freedom to reject any revelation presented to them, but that in doing so they will lose the promises and blessings attached, and will not be able to reap the same rewards as those who are diligent enough to follow all that the Lord asks of them.

We believe that every man is entitled to revelation governing his own salvation, that of his family, and any others he is given responsibility or authority over, but only as long as he acts according to the Spirit and does not seek unrighteous dominion. A man who is not living a law, or hasn't received an ordinance cannot preside over those who do or have.

We believe it to be the privilege of every person to approach God on any matter of obedience, and to confirm with Him that what is being asked of them is His will. God will lead no one astray, but if we are intent on being disobedient, or content with not living all that God has commanded, then we will be leading ourselves away from Him, and cannot excuse ourselves by putting the blame on anyone else.

We believe that it is necessary for us within this life to gain the knowledge sufficient to be saved in the world to come. The most important thing for us to learn being the nature and character of God, for it is our goal to become as He is now. Facts alone though will not exalt us, we must put our faith into action, following all that the Lord commands us to do at whatever sacrifice is asked of us, and only then will He be able to come to us and say, “Thou good and faithful servant.”

Finally, and in summary: We believe that Truth does not change, it can meet any challenge, it has withstood all the attacks made upon it, and it is not afraid of error. If others feel we are wrong, we ask them in all sincerity to show us where. Let them bring their arguments, reasoning, and theories. We do not fear, we will not falter, we know the truth, God is on our side, and we seek to do His will. This is the strength of our position.

The Lord's Church

THE CHURCH

What is a Church? But a place to meet?
To sing a hymn or in solemnity retreat
Is it a building of bricks or stone?
Where we worship together or pray alone
Need we grandiose Cathedrals to recognize
the glory of God before our eyes?
When natures mighty wonders are all around
and God is proven in every sight and sound
Whether in a chapel or a simple home
whether in a temple, wherever we may roam
where two or three are gathered on any day
in Gods name, He is not far away

...OF JESUS CHRIST

What is the Church? Is it but a name?
A title hoisted high to claim earthly fame
and if just a name what does it signify
for we're not alone in believing Christ did die
was raised and offered the same hope to man
if this is what we wish others to understand
What makes it unique is that we know
the Saviour offered a degree of glory to all below
the heavens have place even for the least
and all mankind will reach some state of peace
For through his grace he shall bestow
a resurrection to all who to the earth will go

...OF LATTER-DAY[s]

What is the Church? Why at this time
do we claim at last we have seen the signs
of Christ's return from heaven to man
and that to prepare us this work has began
Restored for the last time to receive her bride
to prepare to meet Him all who live or have died
These last days of Jesus' return
have been anticipated by all who learn
from the Apocalypse the prophetic story
that the Saviour will soon return in glory
And to join Him will be our prize
if in His precepts we do abide

continued ..

...SAINTS

What is the Church? Are we the only ones
who shall in eternity rank as daughters and sons
of the Father who gave our spirits birth
and at this momentous time sent us to earth
This fate shall yet be decided by ourselves
for we'll find we cannot be saved by anyone else
And only those who will give their all
will rise with the just at the last trumps call
So it remains up to us to make a stand
and bring all those we can to this Gospel plan
in hope that they will follow like us
and only in the word of God place their trust

THE ONLY TRUE AND LIVING CHURCH UPON THE FACE OF THE WHOLE EARTH

Only one Church! Only one Lord and Baptism
has been given, and here lies our decision
Follow the Gospel's precepts in our lives
or deny and reject because of the strife
For the world brings against us persecution
In hope to dissuade us, and change our position
And yet sadly many have already chose
a lesser way, we wonder if they know
the implications and outcome of their actions
and the Saints have become split into many factions
when the only way to secure our salvation
is to hold fast to the original foundation

WITH WHICH THE LORD IS WELL PLEASED

The Lord will be pleased with those who will
without reservation His commandments fulfill
and they shall be counted worthy in that day
where hope and happiness will never fade away
And they will know and see for themselves
receiving not fleeting pleasures nor wealth
but the greatest treasure that can be given
the richest blessing - life with their Father in Heaven
When we have reached here, will it be the end?
No the son will become a Father and start over again
And each in our turn will have the same chance
To offer spirits this blessing and see them advance

Cast Out of the Synagogues But Still Strong in the Faith

> "Nevertheless ye are commanded never to cast any one out from your public meetings, which are held before the world."[1]

`Over the last decade, if not before, a policy has been introduced within some wards of the Church in Britain, by the Bishops or Stake Presidents, to deny entry to the building to those who have been excommunicated for apostasy. In all of the cases with which we are acquainted there was no question of those thus prohibited causing any disturbance through their presence. Those banned were content to attend quietly, to refrain from participating in meetings, and to not bring attention to themselves. Yet them being there is considered such a threat as to warrant barring them from the building, and even a few local leaders threatening to physically remove them (and their children) from the chapel. Those unable to attend in this fashion are somewhat surprised that the Church they continue to love seems to resent them so much, and yet freely admits into its buildings those convicted of much more heinous crimes - than holding a controversial opinion - such as child abuse, and adultery.

> "Behold, hath he commanded any that they should depart out of the synagogues, or out of the houses of worship? Behold, I say unto you, nay."[2]

They find themselves in a similar position to those Nephites Alma discovered had been prohibited from entering their synagogues. They must meet together outside of the chapels, at home with their family or with others likewise discriminated, to have the opportunity to sing hymns, and listen to inspiring talks on a Sabbath morning. They have no chance to go to the Stake Centre and watch General Conference, or to have their young children instructed in Primary lessons. Yet they continue to study, worship, and live the Gospel. One wonders how many active members - if the Church meetings and activities were to stop - would remain active in their faith for long.

> "Now I would that ye should understand that the word of God was liberal to all, that none were deprived of the privilege of assembling themselves together to hear the word of God."[3]

What is it that makes these people such a threat? Their presence

1 D&C 46:3
2 2 Nephi 26:26
3 Alma 6:5

must be considered to be a challenge to the personal authority of the local leader, who assumes that when he cuts someone off from the earthly records of the Church, that they should disappear. Perhaps the sight of those removed for apostasy still leafing through their scriptures and singing hymns is an affront to those who believe they should be faithless and miserable, because they are no-longer considered members. The most dangerous prospect of all is that another member may feel the sincerity (if not the Spirit) from one of those excommunicated for having an alternative view, and question whether cutting them off was an appropriate decision. They might ask them what it is they believed that was so offensive, and find them to be reasonable and intelligent, rather than the rabid anti-Mormon it is easy to portray them as when they are not present. In becoming aware that there are Mormons who believe the same scriptures, yet prefer to follow a Gospel that didn't change as the Church has, a member might realize that there is more to the Gospel than just the Church. This wouldn't do, and so it is considered better to ostracize, alienate, and snub the Fundamentalist Mormon rather than to tolerate him, and have to admit his existence.

> "And behold, ye shall meet together oft; and ye shall not forbid any man from coming unto you when ye shall meet together, but suffer them that they may come unto you and forbid them not;"[4]

Whilst a few, more liberal, Branch Presidents and Bishops are aware of this and privately condemn it, and a few of those likewise excommunicated have avoided such action against them, yet many of these Saints (for such they still claim to be) remain unwelcome at their nearest meetinghouses. Appeals to the First Presidency seem to go unanswered, as the First Presidency has mentioned in the past it prefers to lay the responsibility on the local presiding Priesthood heads, rather than interfere. He who watches from the heavens, however, is not oblivious to such actions being taken, and has not been silent in times past as to what His will is. In time He will cease to tolerate this situation, the question is whose side would we have been on? Those who befriended the outcasts and fellowshipped them, those who stood up and were cast out themselves, or those who stood silently by and didn't speak up against injustices such as these? The decision is yours.

"... him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."[5]

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4 3 Nephi 18:22 see 23,30-33

5 John 6:37

True to the Faith

I am a member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which I have no hesitation in testifying is the only true Church upon the face of this earth. According to the records of that Church I was baptized on Christmas Eve 1989 and was excommunicated three years later, and whilst I appealed to the First Presidency against this action, I was unsuccessful in overturning the decision, and remain - as far as the organisation of the Church is concerned - cut off from all the rights and privileges that come with membership.

Those not acquainted with my position might ask “If you believe the Church to be true then why was your name taken from its records?” I find myself equally puzzled at such a situation as this. I had committed no sins, nor was I accused of any. The label under which I was disenfranchised was 'Apostasy', a title usually reserved for anti-Mormons or self-proclaimed prophets, yet I was neither. My crime was believing in doctrines, laws and ordinances that were taught by the early prophets such as Joseph Smith and Brigham Young and that the Church no longer accepts.

It may surprise many other Church members to find that principles which the Saints would have once been considered unworthy for rejecting, a person is now condemned for accepting. It was not my intention to teach as Church doctrine something which is no longer considered such, or to join with any break-off groups. I would of been content to attend my local ward, refraining from partaking of the sacrament, giving prayers or speaking publicly, but I was told that even should I sit silently throughout meetings my presence would be considered a disturbance.

I had always felt that even if someone is incorrect in their ideas about principles of the Gospel, they should be shown where they're wrong, or at least be encouraged to attend Church? Yet it seemed my position presented to them a challenge, one which they were unable or unwilling to meet. The evidence that the doctrines I believed in had been taught by the early Church Presidents was not disputed by many of my local leaders, but the current General Authorities did not agree with the doctrines, and there lay the problem for those who had to sit in judgment over me.

I was charged with believing doctrines which were against the beliefs of the Church at this point in its history, and to that charge I must admit to being guilty, though I have no feelings of guilt for believing as I do. The General Handbook of Instructions, which is the Church's manual for disciplinary procedures says that in all cases such as mine the person should be excommunicated. My Bishop and Stake President were simply following this procedure, and I have no bad feelings towards

them.

Joseph said the Gospel should never change, including all its doctrines, laws and ordinances.[1] He said a man should not be tried for his beliefs.[2] The Book of Mormon and Doctrine and Covenants both teach that a man should not be prevented from attending meetings.[3] Yet all of these things have happened to not just myself, but thousands of people. Yet the majority of members know little or nothing of these issues and are not acquainted with those to whom these things have happened.

How can you still consider yourself a member?

My excommunication was not the end of my life in the Gospel, but the beginning of a greater understanding of it's principles. When I discovered that the Church no longer kept alive certain laws and had changed ordinances, and realized that Joseph had promised they would remain unchanged and never taken from the earth, then I knew the authority must exist somewhere to keep these commandments alive in the way God had restored them, and that there would be others dedicated to the same mission.

The Church was restored for the last time, so could not be superseded or replaced, and still had an important mission to fulfil. I had a testimony of the Church, and was not about to go looking for another. I did however, remember well enough how Joseph had received the Priesthood, presided over it, and performed ordinances prior to the organization of the Church. I was also aware that during the Nauvoo period Joseph had often called together the most faithful members to teach them doctrines and involve them in ordinances that were unknown and unavailable to the rest of the Church.

Through a great deal of investigation and prayer I discovered that in John Taylor's day he was in similar circumstances. He was living in hiding due to the governments hostility towards the principles of the Gospel, and realized that the majority of Church members by that time were prepared to give up those principles if they could be spared the persecution. He took the matter up with his Heavenly Father, who considered it of sufficient importance to send His Son Jesus Christ and the Prophet Joseph to visit and instruct him as to the course he should take.

The next day he called together his counsellor, secretary, and many faithful brethren around him and presented to them a revelation he had received in which the Lord told him that the laws of the Gospel would never be revoked. To fulfill God's will he set apart several men as

1 Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 264, also p. 168-9 & 308
2 History of the Church 5:340
3 3 Nephi 18:32; Doctrine and Covenants 46:3

Apostles with the power to maintain God's laws, even if the Church body would reject them, so that they would always be available to the righteous. Four years later Wilford Woodruff, after seeking the inspiration of the Lord, issued a statement to the Government that one of those principles for which the Church was being persecuted, would no longer be promoted by the Church, and it's practice among members was discouraged. This took the responsibility away from the Church and laid it upon those Priesthood holders set apart to keep alive the principles, just as had been the case in the Prophet Joseph's day.

From that day to the present this power and authority has remained upon the earth, and where it has existed there have also been those willing to live all the principles of the Gospel, and ready to make the necessary sacrifices and commitment to receive all of the ordinances, live all of the laws, and accept all of the doctrines God revealed through Joseph. The Church has carried on its role of spreading the first principles of the Gospel to the world, and initiating and strengthening people in them. Although working separately, they share a common purpose; to fulfill God's will.

Earthly records may have mistakes or may be lost, and a mere piece of paper does not decide a persons standing before the Lord. He decides who will enter the gates of the Celestial Kingdom, and who will be numbered among the Saints whom he accepts as members of His Church. The day will come when we will all be weighed in the balance, but at that time it will be too late to realize that perhaps we hadn't lived the Gospel as fully as we should have, and so we see how imperative it is for us to never stop searching for truth, and to help those whose knowledge may be incomplete or who may be in error to see the truths we hold so dear.

Editorial

This issue might be considered a tribute to the British version of the Messenger. The contents come entirely from previous articles published in England, and deal with the testimonies and thoughts of the editor and his wife.

Interview with a Fundamentalist Sister

Why did you leave the Church?

That is an interesting question. I never physically walked out and left, and I definitely didn't spiritually leave the Church, or the Gospel. Never at any time have I denied that the Church is the one and only true Church upon the face of this Earth.

Joseph Smith said a man should not be excommunicated for his beliefs. I believe in all of the teachings of the early prophets of this dispensation, and because I believed in scripture, and the prophets words, and the word of the Lord, I was looked upon as a threat to the youth, to the primary (to whom I was a teacher), and to anyone who knew me.

The Church was very quick to 'deal' with us, as a few years prior to our investigations other members had been challenged for their beliefs. However because our convictions were so strong and unwavering, and due to us wanting to live principles that the Church no longer taught, it was they who were asking us not to attend or to talk to others about what we believed.

I would love to attend the local ward, but here we're just seen as a threat, despite the fact we made a promise never to speak a word of what we believe within the walls of the Church. Our presence is still considered a disturbance.

How do you feel about those who excommunicated you?

I bear no malice and have no hard feelings towards those who made the decision as to my membership, as they were following procedures from the Church's policies in the General Handbook of Instructions.

There were a handful of members who spread false rumours about my husband and I, and I don't think anyone would feel happy towards such a situation, but as the scriptures teach you should love those who abuse you, spitefully use you, and persecute you, so I pray for them.

It seems uncanny that those who sought to destroy our reputations and even challenged us physically were later excommunicated for their own sins, and perhaps were seeking to justify themselves and draw attention to others 'faults.' But I feel the Lord will deal with them in his own time.

Those who killed Joseph thought they'd gotten rid of Mormonism for good, but it just made the members more determined to keep the principles alive. Those who hoped their few rumours and threats would make me change my mind, don't know how wrong they were.

I have only been in the fullness of the Gospel for 4 years, but I

intend to spend my whole life following the Lord's work, for it will take a lifetime to perfect myself, helping to perfect the Saints, and to build up the Lord's kingdom in Zion.

Do you think you're better than other members of the Church?

No, why should I be? I feel the reason why I am in this position is because I'm not putting any limitations upon the Lord, for there are many mysteries to learn about. There is an eternity of knowledge ahead of us, and if you can't keep an open mind and a discerning spirit about you, then the Lord won't place those mysteries into your hands. You have to be willing to make any sacrifice that the Lord asks of you, but not out of blind obedience, but because you love God and you want to build up His kingdom, not tear it down.

The Church is like a child's milk, the fullness of the Gospel is the meat. A child cannot live on just milk for all of its life, yet there are those who will not go through that weaning process, as there would be too much for them to chew, certainly too much for them to swallow, and are sadly content to be spoon fed for the rest of their (Church) lives. We need to hit a healthy spiritual balance, and put our lives into God's hands.

How do you feel about the changes the Church has made?

The Gospel is unchanging, and any man who takes it upon himself to attempt to change eternal principles risks his own salvation and many others. If someone offers you a gift and you refuse it, it doesn't mean that the gift no longer exists, it will be given to those who will accept it or make use of it. Just because the Church no-longer accepts many essential, eternal principles doesn't mean that they are no longer in existence and that they are no longer valid. Man cannot destroy God's plan.

Faith, Repentance & Baptism

Faith is nothing tangible
to touch or see or win
its born from love, trust, and prayer
a knowledge from within

Then as your faith takes root and grows
it leads you to relent
to ponder on past deeds done wrong
and in Christs name repent

For truly you have found Christs Church
the Saints of Latter-days
and each of us thats gathered here
our testimonies raise

Your baptism is special
a brand new start for you
So may your faith be ever strong
Your spirit always true

The Importance of England In the History of the Gospel

"This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by nature herself,
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall,
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands,
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England."

With these words William Shakespeare's Richard II surveyed the nation he reigned as king over, his words however were not happy ones. He longed for the magnificence Britain had known in better times. Similarly, England's inhabitants today often are heard looking back, to what they believe was a greater past, and a time in the Empire's history they could be proud of.

When the first Apostles of this dispensation to leave the continent of America stepped upon these briny shores, Queen Victoria served as monarch, and whilst Britain still led the world in Literature, Science, and in sheer power, the signs of decay in other areas were becoming apparent. The Apostles noticed the great poverty among the majority of the people, not just in terms of food, but also in a knowledge of the restored Gospel. The nation which had fathered most of the advances within civilization over the last thousand years, was sadly bereft of the most priceless treasure of them all - the Gospel. However, this land was to become a fruitful field, and the lifeblood of the Church would yet come from its shores.

Almost all of the early leaders of the Church could trace their ancestry to England or Scotland, including of course Joseph Smith. John Taylor was born and grew up in this country, and Apostles such as George Q. Cannon, Charles W. Penrose, and George Teasdale found their first home in this "green and pleasant land". Presidents of the Seventy, George Reynolds and Brigham H. Roberts, as well as a further eight General Authorities including a Presiding Bishop were all born in England. No other nation, save the United States of America, has had such a profound effect on the Gospel in this dispensation. And so we might ask, what set this country apart from her European neighbours or the rest of the world?

Joseph Smith, in what has come to be known as the 'White Horse'

prophecy, supposedly spoke about these islands and their significance, thus, “The Lord took of the best blood of the nations and planted them on the small islands now called England and Great Britain, and gave them power in the nations for a thousand years and their power will continue with them, that they may keep the balance of power....The Lion and the Unicorn of Israel is their ensign, the wisdom and statesmanship of England comes from having so much of the blood of Israel in the nation.”

The Apostles found themselves overwhelmed with success in England. The work spread far more rapidly than it had ever done in their homeland, and at one point there were three times as many members of the Church in England than in America. From very early on the spirit of gathering was strong. Brigham Young remarked several times that the British Saints had a strong urge to gather long before they ever learned of the principle, and when it came to them gathering, more came from this country than any other.

Great Britain stands unique in Church history for many reasons; it has the oldest L.D.S. chapel in the world; the oldest continuous branch; the longest running periodical (The Millennial Star, 130 years); it is the only country outside the U.S. on which an Apostle has been ordained (Willard Richards); and the only other nation where a revelation has been received (by Wilford Woodruff); it has the first and longest running mission; the only place where a whole religion has been converted (the United Brethren); the first Book of Mormon and Hymn book outside of America were published here; Joseph Smith's First Vision was first made public in England; and the Pearl of Great Price and the Journal of Discourses were first printed here. The King James Version of the Bible of course came from England, and great religious reformers such as John Wesley. England has been a democracy for almost 900 years, and was the first nation to enshrine basic human rights in a constitutional document (the Magna Carta).

Why did God choose England to play such a special role? In terms of size, many American states are larger. It doesn't have the largest population, and it doesn't have the greatest natural resources. Yet we call it a “land of hope and glory” and sing that “God who made the mighty made the mightiest yet.” Does England warrant such adorations, especially since it perhaps has oppressed as much of the world as it has liberated?

Heber C. Kimball was to learn of how special this land is whilst traveling across Lancashire, he was passing through the village of Chadburn (near Clithero), and had an overwhelming feeling come over him, he felt he was on holy ground, and when he later remarked to Joseph about it, the Prophet explained that it was where the ancient prophets had dedicated the land. What prophets those were we do not know; perhaps when the world was one, Adam or Noah visited this area.

We find in Fox's Book of Martyrs that one of the original Apostles died preaching here, and it is recorded in history that when Rome sent it's first missionaries here, they found that the people already knew the Gospel. There are legends of Jesus having spent much of his adolescence and early adulthood in this country, and that Mary lived out her later years here.

England still has a special purpose to fulfill according to the 'White Horse' prophecy attributed to Joseph Smith. Whilst America is in turmoil through it's collapse and the resulting anarchy, England will feel obliged to step in to maintain peace. Sadly it seems that Britain will be the last nation to submit to the Kingdom of God though, and the anti-Christ will seek to keep a firm hold on it right up to the end. When England does accept the rule of the Kingdom of God though, it will do it as a whole.

> But great are the promises of the Lord unto them who are upon the isles of the sea; wherefore as it says isles, there must needs be more than this, and they are inhabited also by our brethren. *2 Nephi 10:21.*

Farewell to thee England

Farewell to thee England
- bright home of my sires,
Thou pride of the freeman
and boast of the brave,
I have loved thee
- and never till being expires
Can I learn to forget thee,
thou star of the wave.

Farewell to thee England,
a long, long farewell,
To every dear scene
of my infancy's hours,
Never more shall I roam
through each moss-covered dell,
Nor pluck the sweet gems
of thy blossomy bowers.

Farewell to thee England,
and farewell to all
Whose love hath yet hallowed
my pathway below,
Though sadly I leave thee,
I would not recall
One hour of the past
for the present I know.

Though sorrow may cast
its deep shade over my soul,
When memory recalls
one dear form to my mind,
And anguish of spirit
which passeth control,
May crush the lone heart
where that form is enshrined.

I wish not to linger
thy beauties among,
I dare not be false
to the God I adore,
Henceforward my lyre
to His praises is strung,
And to Him I relinquish
those memories of yore.

Yes, England I leave thee,
all dear though thou art,
A country more precious
lies over the wave,
With hope for thee, Albion,
I turn to depart,
God guard thee my country
- protect thee and save.

The rose of thy beauty
may fade from thy brow,
The day of thy glory
in darkness decline
But a halo of splendour
encircles thee now,
Which in regions immortal
more brightly shall shine.

There are hearts on thy bosom
shall hallow thee yet,
There are spirits too noble,
and feelings too pure,
There are creatures too worthy
for God to forget,
Whose love like His goodness
will ever endure.

His blessing be on thee
- thou land of my sires,
Thou pride of the freeman
and boast of the brave,
I have loved thee
- and never till being expires
Can I learn to forget thee,
thou star of the wave.

I.E.R., 24 May 1856, Millennial Star, 12 July 1856

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Appendix

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Compilation of testimonies from faithful latter-day Saints

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Joseph Smith has been Resurrected

Compilation of testimonies from faithful latter-day Saints

Brigham Young, 1857
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Lizzie Smith, 1879
Revelation to John Taylor, 1882
Hill home, 1885
Carlisle home, 1885-6
Woolley home, 1886
Peter Johnson, 1898
Patriarch Sperry, Prior to 1922

Brigham Young – *1857*

– women claim to have seen resurrected Joseph Smith

"As quick as Joseph ascends to His Father and God, he will get a commission to this earth again, and I shall be the first woman that he will manifest himself to.[91] I was going to say first man, but there are so many women who profess to have seen him,[92] that I thought I would say woman."

(Journal of Discourses 4:286, 1857.)

Addison Everett – *Before 1877*

– Shook hands with the Prophet Joseph in the temple

"Brother Addison Everett was very sick, nigh unto death at a time when the temple was being finished and one night in a dream or vision he was sent to the temple by some who told him that Joseph the Prophet wanted to see him.

He went immediately and found there Joseph and Hyrum, Joseph shook hands with him ..."

(Oliver B. Huntington recollections, p. 8)

91 Brigham had said ten years earlier that, "we should yet have Brothers Joseph and Hyrum and many of the Saints in their resurrected bodies with **us** on earth." *(30 July 1847, Wilford Woodruff Journal 3:244)*

92 Interestingly the resurrected Jesus first showed himself to women – Luke 23:55 – 24:11.

Lizzie Smith – *1879*

"she was working in the temple for the dead and while thus employed she saw the Prophet Joseph Smith plainly and distinctly."
(Oliver B. Huntington recollections, p. 7-8)

The Lord – *1882*

"My servant Joseph ... yet lives, and is with me where I am."
(Revelation to John Taylor, 27th June 1882, Unpublished Revelations 81:13-19)

William H. Hill – *1885*
– Joseph visits John Taylor at the Hill home

"While at the Hill house he dedicated the place as one of safety from Brother and Sister Hill and family, and their posterity; and while he was there he was visited at least once by Joseph Smith, the Prophet."
(See Hill and Carlisle manuscripts,[93]
LDS Church Archives)

Alfred Carlisle – *1885-86*
– Joseph Smith's visits John Taylor in the Carlisle home

"One night he was asked by President Taylor to stand guard at the upstairs bedroom where he was going to spend the night. He entered the room alone and bolted the door from the inside. It had a heavy bolt lock that was on the door many years later when I lived in the home. During the night it sounded as if two people were talking in the room when President Taylor came out alone the next morning my uncle told him about hearing voices. He told him he had been conversing with the Prophet Joseph Smith."
(Submitted to LDS Archives, April 1978)

93 The William Hill family records also include the testimony of Barbara O. Kelsch that "While in hiding [in the Hill home, John Taylor] was visited by the Prophet Joseph Smith."

Lorin Woolley - *1886*

"Elder [Lorin] Woolley testified that he knew the Prophets Joseph, Brigham and Heber lived for he had seen them as they appeared to President John Taylor in brother John Woolley's house."

(Andrew Kimball Journal,
25th January 1897.)

Peter Johnson – *8th August 1898*

[During his visit to the spirit world he was told he would yet be a missionary there under the direction of Joseph Smith:] "This remark brought to my mind a question which has much been discussed here, as to whether or not the Prophet Joseph is now a resurrected being. While I did not ask the question, they read it in my mind, and immediately said: 'You wish to know whether the Prophet has his body or not?' I replied: 'Yes, I would like to know.' I was told that the Prophet Joseph Smith has his body, as also his brother Hyrum, ..."

(Relief Society Magazine 7:451-2)

Patriarch Harrison Sperry – *Before 1922*

"Patriarch Sperry was present. He and Brother Woolley have both seen the Prophet Joseph Smith and had much experience in the Church."

(Nathaniel Baldwin Diary,
15th January 1922)

A Response to the Confused

On the 25th of August this year, a letter was sent to the editor of Truth Seeker, titled "An open message to all who are confused", which was intended for the author of the 'autobiographical' piece in the last issue, "True to the Faith". The letter's author has given us permission to publish his remarks (as they appear in italics below), and the writer of the article he took issue with has put together a reply, which we have arranged as a commentary on each relevant paragraph of the letter.

Dear Sirs,

Please pass this along (or publish, if you like) this open message to the author of the autobiographical in the latest issue.

There are many today who are stuck on the apparent abandonment of polygamy as practiced by the early Church in Nauvoo and Salt Lake City eras. They have, almost to a man, expressed this abandonment as evidence that the church is in a state of apostasy. Some have also endorsed the 1886 meeting as having set up an alternate line of "true" priesthood authority. (This is necessary, of course, for them to have a legitimized opportunity to resume the practice.)

I have a friend who has adopted these views, and he and I have had some wonderful conversations on the matter. I have also been motivated by articles published in your web site, which make similar claims. As a result I have studied the scriptures prayerfully and carefully, and have arrived at a few conclusions that I would like to share. (Although some of your readers might not like to hear (or bear) them.

Thank you for taking the time to write and share your thoughts and feelings on this important issue. From the way you have addressed the letter, "Dear Sirs", I have assumed that your comments are not aimed solely towards myself, but towards all Mormon Fundamentalists in general. Whilst I am in no position to speak on behalf of others, I am prepared to explain and discuss the truth as I see it, and defend the beliefs of others if I believe them to have been misrepresented. Nevertheless, I was surprised at some of the assumptions you seem to have made about my own position and beliefs on issues I made little reference to in my article. For instance your letter primarily concerns Plural Marriage, and yet it is a principle I made no mention of in my article whatsoever. Notwithstanding this, I will attempt to put forward the argument that it is practiced today with the correct authority, and in fulfilment of prophecies to the effect that it would never cease to be practiced.

Fundamentalists do not see John Taylor's ordinations in 1886 as a rejection of any Priesthood authority which had existed before that time, but rather a move by him to ensure that the practice of Plural Marriage continued among those who had the authority and desire to carry out God's will. Many Mormons have never needed to 'resume the practice' because

they have grown up in polygamist families who have been living this way since their great grandfather took additional wives under the direction of Joseph Smith or Brigham Young, and their fathers took additional wives under the direction of Presidents of the Church under the presidency of Wilford Woodruff or even Joseph F. Smith.

It is heartening to see that you not only maintain contact with your friend who has these views, but are willing to discuss those views. It is also good to see that you have made many of the issues you have come across, the subject of personal study and prayer. All of us need to be careful when coming to any conclusions, however, about what understanding we have of the subjects we study, as an incomplete knowledge can lead us to wrong conclusions, and may even mean we ask the wrong questions in prayer or misinterpret the answers.

As for our readers not liking to hear or not being able to bear your conclusions, I am sure that many of them have made similar studies as yourself, some hoping to come to the same conclusions as you have or maybe even initially doing so, but eventually gaining through additional study the views they have today.

D&C Section 132 - not about plurality of wives?

1) What the Lord makes clear in the D&C 132 is not the practice of plurality of wives, but the doctrine that any wife (or husband) taken outside of the new and everlasting covenant is for time only. The brief reference to it not being offensive to the Lord for a man to desire as many as 10 (and of course the number is not important here, only the principle) virgins under this new and everlasting covenant is to highlight that WHATEVER number of wives a man may take, all should be taken in the new and everlasting covenant, or the relationship(s) have an end at death.

I agree wholeheartedly "that any wife taken outside of the new and everlasting covenant is for time only", and cannot imagine anyone disagreeing with those remarks. I also agree totally that the example used of taking 10 wives is no mandate for taking that many wives, and that a man with that many wives but without having taken them in the new and everlasting covenant will find that at death those relationships will have their end. What I do disagree with, is the belief that a man with one wife can fulfill the conditions of the New and Everlasting Covenant and enter into Celestial Marriage, and that the relationship will exist beyond this life, without taking upon himself the responsibility of marrying additional wives within the New and Everlasting Covenant.

Plural Celestial Marriage was repeatedly taught to be essential to exaltation by all the Presidents of the Church from Joseph Smith to Joseph F. Smith. An angel came to Joseph Smith and told him he would lose his Priesthood if he didn't introduce Plural Marriage, Church leaders were told they would be released from their positions if they did not take another wife, and Church members were told that if they did not live polygamously that their family would not be together in the eternities.

"Celestial Marriage was applied to and equated with plural marriage until the late nineteenth century." *(The Mysteries of Godliness, David John Buerger, p. 59)*

"An angel of God ... told him *[Joseph Smith]* that, unless he moved forward and establish plural marriage, his Priesthood would be taken from him." *(Eliza R. Snow, wife of Joseph, Biography and Family Record of Lorenzo Snow, p. 69-70)*

"From him *[Joseph Smith]* I learned that the doctrine of plural and celestial marriage is the most holy and important doctrine ever revealed to man on the earth, and that without obedience to that principle, no man can ever attain to the fullness of exaltation in celestial glory." *(William Clayton, Secretary to Joseph Smith, Historical Record 6:226)*

"For it is not meet that men who will not abide My law shall preside over My Priesthood;" *(Revelation to John Taylor, October 13th, 1882, Unpublished Revelations 83:5)*

"... he said that a man who did not have but one wife, in the resurrection that woman will not be his, but [will be] taken from him and given to another." *(Brigham Young, Wilford Woodruff Journal, 31 August 1873)*

Appealing to the carnal mind?

2) Plural marriage, as a practice, does not need a defence. Too many cultures, over too many years have thrived just fine under this practice to suppose that the practice itself is inherently flawed. In fact, Lucifer does not lead nations to fight the practice itself, for it threatens him not one whit - it is of no force out of this world - why should he fight it? He fights only that form of plurality that DOES threaten him - that which is sealed by the Holy Spirit of Promise. I believe Plural Marriage is a smokescreen issue set up by Lucifer to appeal to several different earthly issues that some of us have - appealing, as it were, to the carnal mind, as did the teachings of Korihor.

You seem to be inferring that many of those who currently live Plural Marriage do so because it has appealed to their 'carnal mind'. With how liberal the world has become, a man wishing to irresponsibly fulfill his lusts would be more successful in finding willing partners to satisfy this desire outside of polygamy, as Plural Marriage brings with it responsibilities that someone only interested in sexual gratification is unlikely to want to live up to. Polygamy is often not the issue that draws Latter-day Saints to Fundamentalism, and even with those for whom polygamy becomes an important issue, it is very rarely because of any lustful motivation, but because they have become convinced through their study that it is a duty

which God requires. In fact some of them believe strongly that a man should only have sexual intercourse with his wife when she wishes to have a child, which would certainly require a greater mastery of thoughts and feelings than those who are seeking to gratify their passions would ever submit to.

> "Contrary to popular assumptions, polygamy is not what attracts most converts to Mormon Fundamentalism." *(D. Michael Quinn, Fundamentalism and Society p. 252, 1993)*

> "For the devout, polygamy means a chaste life where sex is initiated mainly at the invitation of the wife." *(Time magazine, Eugene Linden, 1 February 1988)*

Never mandated doctrinally? A remedy to prevalent situations?

3) The idea that by forsaking plural marriage somehow leads to the inescapable conclusion that the L.D.S. church is in a state of apostasy is bizarre and unfounded. The prophesies that indicate that this order will never be removed from the earth are all properly fulfilled in that the New and Everlasting Covenant is still here and still being practiced, just not plurality of wives, which plurality was never mandated doctrinally, but was practiced as a practicality and encouraged as a remedy to several situations that were prevalent in that time. No man in the early church was ever excommunicated for having only one wife. (He may have been excommunicated for cohabiting with more than one if one or more were not wives under the covenant, or for the immorality that lead to de facto "wifehood.)

Whether the Church's abandonment of Plural Marriage constitutes apostasy is a judgment I have never felt qualified to make, but rather leave the matter to the Lord, who I believe will not forsake the Church, but will ensure that it will never stray further than it can be brought back into order through His instrumentation, whilst ensuring that a 'remnant' of the Saints maintains the laws he gave them.

Although you are correct in stating that prophecies about the continuation of the New and Everlasting Covenant should not be assumed to be referring to Plural Marriage, yet there have been enough prophecies to the effect that Plural Marriage itself will continue without cessation that God's prophets have left us in no doubt that as far as they were concerned the practice would never end.

You speak of Plural Marriage remedying situations that were prevalent at the time it was introduced. Might I ask what situations you believe arose that required such a radical change of lifestyle? John A. Widstoe in his book 'Evidence and Reconciliations' wrote a chapter on "Why did the Church practice Plural Marriage?" in which he states that contrary to common misconceptions there were more male Mormons than female during the period in which they lived polygamy, and refers to U.S. census records to prove this point. Another popular theory is that this

practice lead to a rapid increase in the number of children being born to Church members. This idea has also been shown to be incorrect, as there was a lower birth-rate among polygamous wives than monogamous ones.

> "We wont quit practicing Plural Marriage until Christ shall come." *(Wilford Woodruff, John Henry Smith Journal, 9 November 1888)*

> "The implied assumption in this theory, that there have been more female than male members in the Church, is not supported by the evidence. On the contrary, there seem always to have been more males than females in the Church." *(John A. Widstoe, Evidences and Reconciliations, p. 390)*

Joseph - accountable for the use of the keys

4) The latter verses of section 132 (45-50) suggest to me that, having the keys of this power (and nearly everyone agrees that there can be only one at a time who holds the keys - just not on who that one is) that Joseph was justified in using those keys as he saw fit - stewardship at its finest. Joseph could then give or withhold keys, authorities or sealings as he saw fit, and as he was inspired by heaven. Only Joseph, according to the revelation, was accountable for the use of those keys.

It was because Joseph presided over all the keys that he visited John Taylor, and instructed him to ensure that a select group of faithful Priesthood holders be chosen and given the authority to perpetuate the principle Joseph died for, and President Taylor was in hiding because of. Joseph presides over all his successors, they are accountable to him, and he is not accountable to them.

> "Verily I say unto you, the keys of this kingdom shall never be taken from you, while thou art in the world, neither in the world to come." *(Revelation to Joseph Smith, 8 March 1833, Doctrine and Covenants 90:3, see 112:15)*

Secret ordinations invalid?

5) This authority passed on to John Taylor, who then had the authority and stewardship to do with those keys as he saw fit. Suppose he did ordain apostles in 1886? (And I find this remarkable, given the equally strong doctrinally mandated sanction of the assembled quorums of the priesthood for all official actions.) As of his demise, the keys passed to Wilford Woodruff. The supposed "reordering" of the twelve by John Taylor is simply not substantiated in fact. It is a wishful requirement of the apostates, necessary to give body and reason to their doctrine. Wilford Woodruff then had the keys, and could administer them as he saw fit.

This was not the first occurrence in Church history of the ordaining of

Apostles without the sanction of the established Priesthood quorums. We read in the 'Life of Joseph F. Smith', that he was secretly ordained by Brigham Young fourteen months before even Heber C. Kimball, his First Counselor knew about it.[1] George A. Smith, and two of Brigham's sons, Brigham Young, Jr. and John W. Young were also secretly ordained. Brother Smith commented at one time that in Old Testament times, "the keys of the Priesthood consequently had to be kept secret" because of the unrighteousness of the people[2]. Prior to Joseph's death he set up a Priesthood organization called the Anointed Quorum (a.k.a. Holy Order) in which men were ordained to what was called "the fullness of the Priesthood", the majority of Latter-day Saints were totally unaware of this organization and the ordinations which accompanied admittance to it, just as they were ignorant that a select group of Mormons were practising plural marriage until the Church first announced it in 1852.

> "Joseph Smith had established precedent for ordaining men to the highest offices of the Church without prior common consent and without immediate public knowledge. The mere lack of public knowledge, or absence of common consent did not invalidate any appointment or actual ordination made by the President of the Church who held the keys of the Priesthood." *(D. Michael Quinn, The Mormon Succession Crisis of 1844, B.Y.U. Studies, Winter 1976, p. 187-233, see also Reed C. Durham, Succession in the Church, p. 69, 1970.)*

Woodruff abandoned? Reasonable attacks?

6) Note that Wilford Woodruff did not abandon the practice of marriage under the new and everlasting covenant, only the plurality that was so noticeable and attackable in Washington. After removing this visible irritant he left the servants of Satan no reasonable grounds on which to attack (although their attacks continued, and continue now, on unreasonable grounds.) He thus diffused the efforts to destroy the church.

Whilst in the Manifesto, Wilford Woodruff 'advises' the members of the Church to "refrain from contracting any marriage forbidden by the laws of the land", historians have shown that he continued to authorise Plural Marriages until his death, and even one year before he passed away he himself married another plural wife, by the name of Lydia Mountford. Thus we see, as you correctly pointed out, that the apparent abandonment of polygamy was intended to pacify to government, and end its attacks against the Church. However, President Woodruff had no real intention of stopping the practice as his actions and those of the majority of the Apostles after the Manifesto show.

1 Life of Joseph Smith, p. 227
2 George Albert Smith, 18 March 1855, Journal of Discourses 2:212

Professor B. Carmon Hardy identifies 220 confirmed cases of Plural Marriages between 1890 - 1909 which were carried out by the those authorized by the Church President to perform such sealings after the Manifesto. We know that 9 Apostles took additional wives after 1890, and at least 8 continued to perform such marriages for others. (Solemn Covenant, Appendix II, p. 394-425; Chart on p. 231; See pages 227-232 for details of President Woodruff's marriage to Madame Mountford in 1897.)

For additional evidence of post-Manifesto Plural Marriage as approved of and authorized by Church leaders, see the following - Kenneth L. Cannon II, "After the Manifesto", Sunstone 8:27-35, January 1983; D. Michael Quinn, "L.D.S. Church Authority and New Plural Marriages", Dialogue 18:9-105, Spring 1985; Richard S. van Wagoner, "Mormon Polygamy", 1986.

Acting without authority?

7) All temple sealers who laboured under the authority of John Taylor, including any who might have received "private" authority, had to receive their sanction to continue as sealers from Wilford Woodruff. Since Pres. Woodruff Dis-authorized the practice of plurality (at least in the US where it was illegal - comments to follow), any sealers who continued to permit plurality were acting alone, and without authority. All of these who were detected were chastened, as were those who ordained blacks prior to the official sanction, or who performed and perform other such ordinances with disregard of those who hold the appropriate keys. If there were apostles or sealers ordained by John Taylor, they were never in the quorum of the twelve, and their authority (as with more recent non-quorum apostles) died with them.

Wilford Woodruff was inspired to take the responsibility of living plural marriage off the general membership of the Church, as the majority neither wanted to live it nor were worthy to, but he knew that God "would never give a revelation to abandon plural marriage" entirely[3], as He had stated to John Taylor four years earlier "I have not revoked this law nor will I."[4] Joseph's authority did not die with him, and the Apostles (whose ordinations Joseph oversaw in 1886) were given authority to ordain others. Would Joseph have made such a spectacular appearance, to explicitly approve of John Taylor's actions (which Joseph or Jesus probably recommended in the first place) only to allow the calling and commission of these men to be annulled a year later when President Taylor died?

Plural Marriage by death and divorce? Lived in countries where legal?

3 Minutes of the Quorum of Twelve, 12 December 1888

4 27 September 1886, Unpublished Revelations 88:9

8) Be wary of saying that Plural Marriage is not practiced with authority in the Church at this time. Besides there being many men who have been sealed to more than one wife under the new and everlasting covenant by reason of death or divorce (and in the case of divorce, the first sealing is not undone automatically) there are circumstances not widely known that fulfill the promise that there would never be a time when children were not born under this (plurality) till the second coming. There are countries in the world where plurality of wives is not illegal, and there are members of the church in those countries. More than this I decline to say openly.

Serial monogamy, that is the marrying of different wives in succession, whether by reason of divorce or death, is not polygamy or plural marriage in any sense of the word, and was not considered such by those Church leaders who taught the principle, or by those members who lived it. Surely, successive marriages by reason of death or divorce cannot be seen by the Church as a blessing, an ideal, or a sign that the commandment to live Plural Marriage is being kept. As far as polygamy among members being practiced in countries where it is legal goes; If a man were to be sealed in the London Temple to several different women, and thereafter cohabit with them, he would not be in breech of any British law, and yet I would challenge anyone to find an L.D.S. Church statement approving the continuation of plural marriage within England, or to find anyone who has lived that principle in Britain after the Manifesto (or anywhere else after the death of Joseph F. Smith) without being excommunicated.

> "Thus, people who marry legally within African culture are now defined as sinful by a church that once advocated polygamy in defiance of U.S. laws." In 1962 the First Presidency discussed whether Nigerian polygamists should be baptized and decided against it, this was reviewed in 1979, but the leaders decided to not alter their original policy of not allowing polygamists who live in countries where polygamy is legal to be baptized. *(Fundamentalism and Society, D. Michael Quinn, p. 274-5)*

Changes in the temple - Only withdrew what was not fundamentally necessary?

In consequence of these points, those who claim that the church is in a state of apostasy are standing on thin ice, ice that will break, once Satan withdraws his support from under them. Most of the other claims of apostasy on the part of the church are offshoots from this erroneous claim. Even the changes to the temple ceremony - widely criticized - represent only wording changes, and in a special case, the withdrawal of four actions that were not fundamentally necessary, and were all within the franchise to teach the temple principles as he sees fit that comes with the authority to exercise the stewardship over the keys mentioned earlier.

Modern Fundamentalists are not the only ones who disapprove of changes to ordinances, Joseph Smith, Brigham Young, and Wilford Woodruff have left us their views against the possibility of changes being made to the temple ceremony, and President Young had been given the special commission by Joseph Smith to ensure that the endowment was performed in its 'perfect' form. Does an unchangeable God change perfect laws, ordinances, or principles which are part of an eternal and unalterable Gospel? If laws or covenants are revoked, so are the blessings attached to them[5], but in this dispensation we have been promised that the Gospel has been restored never to be taken away again, and that there will always be some keep alive God's laws in their lives. The Fundamentalists believe themselves to be that group of people.

> "The order of the house of God has been, and ever will be, the same, even after Christ comes; and after the termination of the thousand years it will be the same; and we shall finally enter into the celestial kingdom of God, and enjoy it forever." *(Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, p. 91)*

> "I consider that if there ever was a man who thoroughly understood the principles of the Endowments it was Brigham Young. He was with Joseph Smith from the beginning of the Endowments, to the end, and he understood it if any man did. Now, if I ever have anything to do or say, in any Temple on the earth, concerning the Endowment, I would say: Follow the pattern that President Young has set to us, and not deviate one iota." *(Wilford Woodruff, 8 June 1887)*

Reclaiming the Church?

Wasn't it Korihor who was told by an impostor angel to "go reclaim" the church because they had all gone astray? Beware my beloved siblings. All is not as Satan makes it seem.

Brother W. ...

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5 D&C 58:30-32

Mormon Fundamentalists don't claim to either have the commission or the authority to set the Church in order. They look forward to the time when the 'One Mighty and Strong' spoken of in Section 85 of the Doctrine and Covenants will "set in order the house of God" (verse 7), who the majority of them believe to be Joseph Smith, as it is his "business and mission in all [his] lives to set in order all the affairs the Church and Kingdom."[6] The Church also has no authority to set Fundamentalists in order, because "A man obeying a lesser law is not qualified to preside over those who keep a higher law."[7] As has been shown throughout this response - all is not as the Church has made it seem.

[A few days after receiving the above reply, Brother W. ... responded as follows -]
Dear Brother,

I thank you warmly for your response, and your clarity and conciseness. ... your straight forward approach is most refreshing.
I thank you, too, for the citations you included with your response. I will look at all of them and add them to my pool of reflection. As you know, even those in the Church who have much research on this subject are mostly unwilling to share or discuss it because of the latent fear that what they cherish will be taken from them.

I am apparently the victim of popular misconception about why Fundamentalists practice Plural Marriage.

Anyway, again thanks for your response, and if you have time, please communicate further with me. W. ...

6 D&C 90:16
7 John Taylor, 10 October 1882, Life of Wilford Woodruff, Mathias F. Cowley, p. 542

Copyright on ‘Mormons’?

A few weeks ago I was emailed a copy of a Press Release regarding the use of the term 'Mormon' and which has been issued by the Church. Checking the LDS Church's own website, and having subsequently seen it mentioned in Utah-based newspapers I assume that it is to be taken as an official matter of policy. For those unacquainted with the statement, I'll begin by quoting it below -

Official news release from the Church

Misuse ofthe Term “Mormon” in Recent News Stories

13 September 2000

The terms Mormon fundamentalist, and Mormon splinter group are regularly, albeit inaccurately, used by some news media outlets to describe individuals or organizations who embrace the practice of polygamy. Such use of these terms is misleading, since they imply that the individual or organization described is affiliated in some way with “the Mormons” or “the Mormon church”.

The term Mormon is a nickname applied exclusively to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or to that church (see The Associated Press Stylebook). It is not accurately applied to any other person or organization.

Polygamists and polygamist organizations that occasionally make the news are not dissident wings of the Church. They have no affiliation whatsoever with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Since those who practice polygamy today are not affiliated with “the Mormon church”, and since they are not “Mormons”, a more accurate and less misleading description of them in the media would be polygamist, or polygamous sect or polygamous church or polygamous group or polygamous movement, etc.

Although this matter may seem plain enough, I have found myself wondering about the intention of the Church in making this press release and how they intend it to be interpreted. To ascertain the meaning of something we need to look at who authored it, what position they hold, what their reasons for writing it were, how they wish it to be understood, and who their intended audience are.

The absence of the signatures of any general authorities, and the fact that it does not claim to be revealed from the Lord, nor uses His words, would suggest that it is not to be considered a revelation. Whether it's author considers themselves to have been inspired to write it, or someone felt inspired to ask them to do so is another matter entirely.

Seeing that it was issued as a press release, I think we may safely assume that it is a product of the Public Relations Department of the Church. We know that on some occasions named and unnamed individuals in that department are called up or feel prompted to make corrections, reiterations,

and clarifications. There doesn't seem to be any compelling reason to assume otherwise in this case.

This raises the question,"what position do such PR officers hold?" As far as their individual Priesthood goes, they do not seem to be ordained to a unique office (as General Authorities are), nor have I seen any indication that it is their calling to do what they do. They may feel called to it, and may have unique talents that suit them to such a position, but it is perhaps a job like any other, only with the greater responsibility of putting across the teachings of the Church to the media.

This statement was not aimed at members of the Church, but instead at "news media outlets", in other words, the Radio and TV stations and newspapers. The purpose of it is to discourage them from identifying polygamists as being "dissident wings of the Church." Some may misinterpret from this that such 'polygamists' seek to give the impression that their actions are accepted by the Church. The press release does not state this however, and it is not the case. In fact, such polygamists are only too aware that they are not officially part of the Church, are not considered members, and that the Church wishes to disassociate itself from them. In fact many are only to eager to point out the differences between themselves and the Church.

Where confusion (for me anyway) arises over how we are intended to understand the PR statement, is in the way it uses the word, "Mormon". Just to refresh the memory of those reading this, the press release says *"The term Mormon is a nickname applied exclusively to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or to that church. It is not accurately applied to any other person or organisation."?*

To my knowledge the Church does not have copyright on the word 'Mormon'. Just as the word Christian was probably first used antagonistically by those hostile (or at least ignorant) of the belief of the followers of Jesus, so too was the word Mormon, first used by those who didn't believe in the Book of Mormon, to describe the people who did believe in it and those who sought to follow it's teachings. Seeing that the Book of Mormon was published before the Church was organized, it is quite possible that the terms "a Mormon" and "Mormons"were applied even before the Church existed.

Despite the fact that the title didn't originate with members of the Church, they came to embrace it and use it to describe themselves. There was no shame in being known as believers in the Book of Mormon. Yet now it seems that some Mormons are trying to say that another group of people who also believe in the Book of Mormon are not Mormons at all. This is not only confusing for non-members, but also for those who are now being told they are not Mormons.

As an alternative the PR release suggests, "*Since those who practice polygamy today are not ... "Mormons", a more accurate and less misleading description of them in the media would be polygamist ..."*

But in response to this the Fundamentalists might as well ask, "Inasmuch as a Mormon is a believer in the Book of Mormon: What else do you call a group of mostly monogamous people who read and study the

Book of Mormon, seek to live by it's teachings, and because of this tend to call themselves Mormons?" It seems to them to be the most appropriate and accurate title for non-Mormons to understand, and let other Latter-day Saints know that you share the same basic beliefs.

To call these people Polygamists is not only inaccurate, but identifies them by a lifestyle that many of them do not follow. In fact the majority of Fundamentalists are not engaged in living Plural Marriage (which is technically called polygyny), and some quite probably have no intention to live in this manner. One Mormon scholar even found through his research that, "Contrary to popular assumptions, polygamy is not what attracts most converts to Mormon Fundamentalism."[1]

What seems most paradoxical of all is that the Church has often made a point of discouraging the press from referring to its members as Mormons or to the Church as the Mormon Church, but now does not wish them to apply that term to others who don't mind it being used to describe them. In fact on the Church web site they point out that The LDS Church is not correctly called the Mormon Church, even going so far as to call it a 'myth'.

It must also be pointed out that those outside of the Church have - in a similar way - often tried to say that Mormons are not Christians, and have wished to apply the term Christian only to evangelical Protestants. The similarity between their arguments and those of the LDS PR departmentcan be seen from the following chart which summarizes their positions:

Protestant argments against Mormons being Christians	LDS Refutation	LDS arguments againsts Fundamentalists being Mormons	Fundamentalist Refutation
Term Christian has traditionally been applied to Catholicism and Protestants	Term was originally derogatorily used, and didn't originate with Church	Term Mormon has been associated with Church since its inception	Term first used by outsiders, existed even before Church organized
Mormons are not Biblical Christians	Bible does not define term Christian, and we do believe in Bible	Church has right to define and use term	The scriptures do not use the word to describe a group of people
Mormons are against Christian churches	Mormons accept others as Christians	Fundamentalists are anti-Mormon	Fundamentalists accept all of Mormon doctrine

Thus we see the inappropriateness of trying to monopolize or restrict a nickname we didn't create, which the Church doesn't seem keen for non-members to apply to its members or the Church, and which aptly describes

1 D. Michael Quinn, Fundamentalism and Society p. 252, 1993

those who believe in the Book of Mormon, whether they are accepted as members of the Church or not.

The Public Relations statement also seems to take exception to the term 'Fundamentalist' as have some General Authorities. However, in a theological context the term Fundamentalism is accurately used to describe a group of people who hold to a religions earlier beliefs and practices. Even though some may dispute whether such doctrines were ever fundamental to the Gospel or Church, it is certainly the case that some Mormons saw them as such then and some still do now.

Those who have criticized the title have perhaps mistakenly thought that Fundamentalists first applied the word to themselves, perhaps to identify themselves with the Mormon Church, but in fact the term originated with non-member reporters and theologians trying to differentiate such people from the mainstream orthodox LDS Church and its members. What makes such hostility from some in the Church seem even more surprising is that the Encyclopedia of Mormonism, which was encouraged by the Church, mostly written by Church stalwarts, and carefully reviewed and approved by the Church, actually calls such people, “Mormon Fundamentalists” itself!

Perhaps it would be a good exercise for those suspicious of the intentions and beliefs of Mormon Fundamentalists to meet with some themselves and discuss these issues, as it is only through dialogue and understanding that such issues can be resolved, and that we can truly decide for ourselves what makes someone a Mormon. In the meantime both orthodox and Fundamentalist Latter-day Saints should strive to be the best Mormons they can be.

Information

New articles will be available on the web at -

http://mormonessenger.org

Disclaimer

The editors will make every effort to represent views that are in accord with the restored Gospel. Although these views may not be necessarily those expressed by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. Articles that are contributed to the journal, may also include opinions that are not those of the editors, although every effort will be made to ensure of truthful interpretation and reliable and accurate scholarship.